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A

TREATISE

ON

DIVINE UNION,

DESIGNED TO POINT OUT SOME OF THE

INTIMATE RELATIONS BETWEEN GOD AND MAN

IN THE

HIGHER FORMS OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.

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TO THE READER.

THERE are some things in the following pages which may seem difficult to be understood, and perhaps still more so to be received; but all I can ask is, that they may be read in that spirit of simplicity and prayer in which, I trust, they have been written. I have no private or party interests to subserve; but only wish to do what I may seem, in the providence of God, called to do, for that cause of Christ, of God, and humanity, which is dearer to me than anything else. And this is a consolation which always attends me, — the full belief that the truth will live and do the good which is appropriate to it, and that all error will and must die.

Some of the principles which are laid down in these pages will be found in other writers. They are clearly sustained by some passages in St. Augustine, and in other writers of an early date. They harmonize with many views and expressions which are found in the devout writings of Thauler and Arndt. The well-known and much esteemed treatise of Scougal, entitled, "The Life of God in the Soul of Man," intimates its leading ideas in its title. The object of this writer, although he takes a more

limited view of the subject, appears to be much the same with that which is aimed at in the present work. The view which is taken of the nature of pure or holy love, namely, that in its basis it is the love of existence, (a doctrine to which some, who have not reflected much on the subject, may have objections,) does not essentially differ, I believe, from that which is presented by President Edwards, in his Treatise on the Nature of Virtue. All those writers, of various denominations of Christians, who hold to the doctrine of sanctification in the present life, as a thing provided for and attainable, agree more or less with what is here said. But this would afford but little satisfaction, if I did not fully believe that it is also in accordance with the Bible.

It is generally conceded among Christians that a better day is approaching, and the great characteristic of that day will be, and must be, *practical holiness*. So that holiness of heart and life, as a matter of personal realization, is brought closely home to all. Let us, therefore, in the expressive language of Scripture, stand "with our loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness." Perhaps we may be called to endure trials; but we should not forget that truth emerges safely from its conflicts, and that virtue is not destroyed, but only purified, by suffering. All things will be well, when God dwells in man.

T. C. U.

Bowdoin College, Jan. 1, 1851.

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PART FIRST.

OF GOD, AND THE RELATIONS HE SUSTAINS TO HIS CREATURES.

CHAPTER I

ON THE NATURE OF DIVINE UNION.

All original life in God. — The life which is not from God, not life, but death. — Of the union of God and man. — The basis of this union to be found in God's nature. — Of the different kinds or forms of union. — Union of pacification, of alliance, of nature.

From God all things come. To God, as the universal originator and governor, all things are in subjection. In ascertaining what God is, we necessarily ascertain the position and responsibilities of those beings that come from God, and are dependent on him. The life of his moral creatures, so far as it is a right and true life, is a reproduction, in a finite form, of the elements of his own life. "God created man in his own image. In the image of God created he him." Gen. 1: 27. The Saviour, in speaking of himself, in his incarnate state, says, "I am in the Father, and the Father in me." John 13: 11. God, in carrying out and perfecting the great idea of a moral creation, subjects the infinity of his being to the limitations of humanity, and reproduces himself in the human soul. So that man's life may truly be described, as God's life in humanity.

2. Nor, in the strict sense of the terms, can any

thing but the Divine Life, or the life of God in the soul, be called life. Those who have gone astray from God, just so far as they have lost the divine life, and have sunk into the natural life, are dead. Hence, the expressions of the apostle: — "And you hath he quickened, who were *dead* in trespasses and sins." Ephes. 2: 1. The eternal vitality, the breath from the Infinite, the life of God in the soul, ceases to be in them. And being dead, by the absence of God as an indwelling principle, they must be recreated, or born again, by his restoration. It is not enough, that provision has been made, in the death of Christ, for man's forgiveness. Forgiveness, it is true, has its appropriate work. It cancels the iniquity of the past; but this is not all that is necessary. It is not without reason, that the learned Schlegel commences his profound work on the philosophy of history by saying, that "the most important subject, and the first problem of philosophy, is the restoration in man of the lost image of God." The immortal nature must be made anew, must be re-constituted, if we may so express it, on the principle of life linked with life, of the created sustained in the uncreated, in the bonds of *divine union.*

3. In entering, therefore, upon the important subject of Divine Union, by which we mean the union of God with man, and of man with God, we must first direct our attention to the central truth, to which reference has already been made, and consider *what God is.* It is in God's nature, in what he is and what he requires, that the basis of union must be placed.

Before doing this, however, it is proper to make a few remarks, in explanation of that state of mind, and of that position of things, which are implied in that union of God and man, which is the topic of this treatise. And we proceed to remark, in the first place, that the

union, which ought to be established between God and man, and which the Gospel of Christ proposes to restore, is not merely an union of pacification. Man is now at war with his Maker. War cannot exist without division. Those who are in contest with each other, stand apart, not only alienated in heart, but separated in position. It is thus with God and man, while man remains a sinner. When man ceases to contend, he is brought into union. But it is only the union of pacification. And it is not enough.

4. We remark again, that the union, which the mediatorial agency of the Saviour proposes to restore, is not merely an union of alliance. The first step is pacification. The two parties, God on the one side and man on the other, have entered into a pacificatory arrangement, by which it is agreed that man shall cease to rebel and to fight, and God shall cease to resist his wicked attempts and to punish. In addition to this, which is more an union or harmony of position than of feelings, man is willing to unite his efforts in carrying out the divine plans. God condescends to accept these indications and movements of return; — and thus there is constituted the additional union of alliance.

5. Both steps, it must be admitted, are very important. What can be more wise in man, than to lay down the weapons of his warfare? What can be more pleasing, than to see him uniting his efforts in the promotion of God's cause in the world? It would be difficult to exaggerate the beneficial results which necessarily flow from these forms of union. All who come to God must pass through them. But, in passing through them, they cannot attain the highest ends of their being, without going further.

And the reason is, that these two forms of union,

although they exclude the idea of hostility, are consistent with, and imply, the existence of two parties;—each occupying his own position, *and sustained in his own strength.* It is true they have ceased to contend. It is true, also, they have entered into alliance with each other. But still, even under these more favorable circumstances, it cannot be said of man, in relation to God, as was said by the Saviour, in relation to his heavenly Father, "I and my Father are one." The prayer of the Saviour, "As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, *that they also may be one in us*," has not been fulfilled. There is still a point of union which has not been reached. Something more is necessary.

6. Union, therefore, as we desire to develop it in this treatise, is not merely a treaty of peace, nor even the closer compact of alliance; but a combination or union of nature; not the union of juxta-position, but of filiation; not the union of convention, but the union of life.

It is to this union that all who are born of God must at last come;—not uniting with God, as man unites conventionally with his fellow-man, in the formation of civil society, or for any other purpose, but with that union of life with life which binds together the father and the son.

7. Undoubtedly it must be admitted that this union is not reached at once. At least this is not the general method of God's operation. God works *gradatim*, step by step; by the gradualism of continually developed law, and not by the impromptus and ejaculations of blind effort, without any wise and permanent principles as the foundation of effort. It is a great thing to *begin* to return; it is a much greater to complete the return. It is a great thing even to look towards God with feelings of humility and faith. It is a much greater to find

him, encouraged as it were by these solicitations of humble faith, approaching nearer and nearer, in the mild radiance of a reconciled divinity;—melting away and removing, at every step of his approach, some envelopment of selfishness, until, the doors of every faculty being open, he enters his own purified temple, and becomes its everlasting centre.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE ETERNITY OF GOD.

The principles of union with God, to be found in God's nature. — On the eternity of God. — Results involved in the fact of God's eternity. — The eternity of God involves his unchangeableness. — God, in being eternal, the source of all true life. — Remarks on man's responsibility.

In proceeding in the investigation of the subject of union with God, it will be necessary, if we wish to arrive at satisfactory results, to consider briefly some of the leading elements, or principles, of the Divine Nature. We have already had occasion to say, that it is in God's nature, in what he is and what he requires, that the basis of union must be placed. It is obvious that there can be no union between two parties who are at variance, unless there be a change on one side or the other, or on both. But it is hardly necessary to say, that, on the side of God, it is impossible for any change to take place, except that of a just correspondence with the altered relations of the other party. The perfection of his position ensures its immutability. The change, preparatory to union, must first take place in man. What this change must be, on what principles it must take place, in what directions it must extend, can be known only by what we know of God.

2. Perhaps it may be said, that the powers of the human mind are so restricted that they will not allow us to comprehend God fully. Undoubtedly our conception of him, based partly upon what is known, and

hardly less upon what is unknown, is exceedingly imperfect. But its imperfection is reduced, and we are able to approximate the higher and more perfect idea of God, in proportion as we divest it of the limitations of form, time, and place. God is not the possessor or subject of any form, which is essential to him as an outward expression of his nature, although he may be said to live in all forms; — just as he is without a fixed and definite locality, although he may be said to be present in all places. And as he is not limited by form or by place, so he is not limited by *time*.

3. We may be said, therefore, in entering upon the remarks which remain to be made in this chapter, to begin where there is no beginning. That which *begins* to exist has a cause. That which exists *without* a cause is eternal. God only is without cause. God only is eternal.

Such is the great truth, which, in being connatural to the human mind, may be said to be written there by the pen of the Creator: a truth which is, to a considerable extent, the basis of natural religion, and is recognized by all sound philosophy.

4. GOD ONLY IS ETERNAL. Such being the case, all things that exist out of himself, *are*, and *must* be, from him. To say that a thing has its birth from the bosom of its own causation, is the same as to say that it exists without a cause. And this is inconceivable. All things, therefore, are, by the necessity of the case, in alliance with God; — the creatures of his divine and infinite administration; springing up, in the appropriate day of their generation, from the Uncreated Life; — the Life, which has been, now is, and will be everlasting.

5. It is this truth which, more than anything else, makes the eternity of God a matter of so deep interest.

It is the eternity of God which constitutes him, in one of the most essential respects, the universal Father. Everything which exists having, before the time of its existence, no power or possibility of self-origination, must have had its birth from him. And we may go further even than this. The fact of his eternity, taken in connection with his other attributes, involves the idea, that all things are not only *from* him, but always have been, and are now, *in* him. His eternity embraces the future as well as the present. His mind sweeps over all, understands all, sustains all, regulates all, unites all in one. The successive developments of being and action, which arrest and occupy the human mind in the different stages of their progress, are a present reality to him. Their causation does not remove them from that which causes; — and time does not, and cannot, take them out of eternity. They are what they are, because they are in him; — and out of him they must necessarily cease to be. And thus he is constituted, by the very elements of his nature, the circumference as well as the centre, the end as well as the beginning, the UNIVERSAL ALL.

6. That man does not perceive this, is true. And he does not perceive it, because, trying to see in his own light, and not in the light which God himself is ready to impart, his "*foolish heart is darkened.*" None can know God, in the fullest sense of the terms, but those who are fully restored to him. Separated to a great distance by the repulsive power of selfishness, God, instead of being the UNIVERSAL and the ALL, is not only very remote, and much diminished in appearance, to those who are not in harmony with him, but is even doubtful in existence. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." But it does not follow, because God is not known, that he does not exist; nor, because

he is not realized as eternal, that he is not eternal. Existence does not depend upon perception. "The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not."

7. God, being the Eternity of things, is the reality. By reality, we mean that which is substantial and essential, that which is *permanent*, as well as that which is just and good; not the shadow of the rock, but the rock itself; not the reflection of the sun, but the sun itself; the I AM, as he names himself, because there is no other adequate expression of him, the *being*, and not merely the *beginning* to be. His eternity involves his *essentiality*, because, as we see no reason why he should begin to exist, so we see no reason why he should begin to *change*. His unchangeableness is but a part of his eternity. From him, as the essential, or the I AM, all other things not only flow out as from the original fountain, but continue to live from him as from a present life.

8. Here, then, is the beginning, the foundation principle, of our argument. God, in being eternal, is the source of all things, whatever they may be, which have an existence, or rather the appearance of existence, separate from himself. In other words, all things which are finite, and are created in time, embodied though they may be in their own form, and sustained by their appropriate laws of being, are necessarily from him and by him. And thus, when we consider things in their origin and relations, how they all come from God, and how they are all dependent on him, we shall obtain one of the most important conceptions which we associate with God, namely, that in *his* life is the *true* life, and that out of his life there is nothing but death. We shall thus, in this view of God, and of the relations he

sustains to other beings, realize, in a true and high sense, the import of those expressions which are so often found in writers of great religious experience, — expressions liable to be perverted, but still conveying a great truth in a concise form, — "the ALL of God, and NOTHING of the creature."

9. These views, undoubtedly, when we come to speak of man's moral responsibility, will be entitled to their just modifications. It is our object at the present time, in as few words as possible, to present the general truth under consideration in the strong light which properly belongs to it, unembarrassed by subordinate distinctions. When we assert that the doctrine of God's eternity involves the idea that all things come from him, we of course mean that they come from him by a *true descent;* — that they have their origin from him in the line of a just filiation. If man, in the exercise of his moral responsibility, — forgetting and abusing the fact that he is of God and lives his true life only in union with God, — undertakes to become a *self-originator*, and to do things in his own supposed strength and wisdom, it would be absurd to speak of such things as of divine origin.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE OMNIPRESENCE OF GOD.

Necessity of Divine Omnipresence. — Of its extent. — Of its nature, or mode. — God present to everything in the entireness of his being. — Relation of these views to the doctrine of Divine Union.

God, who, in transcending the limitations of time, is eternal, in transcending the limitations of place, is also everywhere present. It is not possible for him to be confined to particular places and things, to the exclusion of other places and things, but he is and must be God everywhere.

"If I take the wings of the morning," says the Psalmist, "and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand hold me."* And again he exclaims, "Whither shall I go from thy spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy *presence?*"

2. God is present in everything we see, in everything we touch; present in clouds, and rivers, and forests; present in our bodies; present in our spirits; present, with variations of manner and degree, in every thought and feeling. Philosophy and poetry, in all ages of the world, and in all countries, repeat and confirm this great truth of the Scriptures.

> "Should Fate command me to the farthest verge
> Of the green earth, to distant, barbarous climes,
> Rivers unknown to song; where first the sun
> Gilds Indian mountains, or his setting beams

* Ps. 139: 10.

Flame on the Atlantic isles; 't is naught to me,
Since God is ever present, ever felt,
In the void waste, as in the city full."

3. But we may, perhaps, distinguish between the fact and the nature or mode of God's presence. Admitting the great truth of the universality of the divine presence, the question still remains, — is God present directly or indirectly, present by a direct and immediate personality, or only by the subordinate and intermediate presence and agency of other beings?

It cannot be doubted, I suppose, that many persons, who hold to the doctrine of God's omnipresence speculatively, are apt to think of him, notwithstanding, as a God *over* us, without thinking of him, in an equal degree, as a God *with* us. "We behold him, but not *now;* we see him, but not *nigh.*"* This was a mistake of some of the ancient heathen philosophers, and was, perhaps, comparatively innocent in them, who looked upon God as omnipresent virtually rather than really, as sending out the universality of his presence from a local residence in the heavens, and as administering the affairs of the universe, in all its parts, not personally, but by a secondary and distant agency. Some Christians also, those who are beginners in the Christian life, have regarded God in a similar light; namely, in a character and position like that of an earthly monarch; beholding him, in imagination, seated on a throne of great splendor, but infinitely remote, and governing his numerous kingdoms by means of angelic or other agencies.

4. This is certainly an imperfect view of God's omnipresence; not so much false, perhaps, as defective, and suited to certain degrees of Christian experience, but not to its highest results. The presence of God,

* Numbers 24: 17.

when rightly understood, is a direct and immediate presence; a presence which allows of no other object or agency between itself and the object with which it is united. "He is not far from every one of us," says the apostle; "for in him we live, and move, and have our being."* If we may be allowed to illustrate the subject from the analogies of the material world, we may, perhaps, say, in expressions which suggest the truth, if they do not fully convey it, that God's presence constitutes, to the soul, and to all beings and things which exist, a spiritual *atmosphere*. "As the birds, when they fly, whichever way they go, though they change their place, still fly in the air, and everywhere meet the air; as the fishes, which swim in the seas, everywhere find the waters, and are encompassed with them on all sides; so we, how much soever we change our place, and whithersoever we please to go, shall everywhere meet with God. And God, says St. Augustine, shall be more present within us, in the very midst of our being, than we are ourselves."†

5. Nor is this all that is to be said on this subject. Owing to the limited powers of our minds, and that confusion of our ideas which is the result of sin, we are apt to think of God as present in all places, not in the entireness or wholeness of his being, but by the spreading out or *diffusion* of his being; so that, in a given place or a given object, considered as separate from other places and objects, there is not the whole of God present, but only a *part* of him in that particular place or object. This also seems to be an error. God is not only universally present, but, wherever he is present at all, he is present without separation, present as God complete, in the fulness and perfection of his divinity.

* Acts 17 : 27, 28. † Boudon, God Everywhere Present, Ch. I.

6. And this is true in small things, as well as in great. God tells us that he clothes the lilies of the field, that he watches over and protects the sparrow, and feeds the young ravens. But it would be a mistake to suppose, after the manner of men, who know only and feel only in particulars and by degrees, that he does this by a *part of his nature only*, while the greater and better part of his thought, and of his immense heart of love, is given to other objects. On the contrary, he is a God equally present to everything, without distinction of place or degree of existence, — as much present, in the extent and unity of his being, to an insect as to a man or angel. Undoubtedly this view, even with the explanatory and very just remark that he is not so much comprehended and received by inferior beings as by those which are greater, conveys a wonderful idea of God; but not so wonderful as to furnish a reason for its disbelief and rejection. The infinite Godhead, stooping, by the very perfection of his nature, condescends to take an interest in all things he has made, — to hear the songs of his own birds, to play with the shepherd's flocks as they sport on the sides of the mountains, and to rejoice with the young lions as he feeds them in the forest. It is not a portion of God, not a half or a tithe of the Divine Existence, as our imperfect conceptions of things are apt to suppose, but a whole God, — God in the infinity of his perfections, — that watches over and rejoices in them.

So that it is necessary to add to the idea of the universality of his presence that of the directness and intimacy of his presence, and also that of the fulness and perfection of his presence.

7. It is hardly necessary to say, that this view of God's omnipresence is important in explaining the facts

and relations of Divine Union. The *physical* union, if these views are correct, is already complete. God cannot have locality, and man cannot be without it. And man's locality is always in God, although his character may not harmonize with his position. And here is the source of his unhappiness. To be in God by physical position, and out of God by divergency of character, is to be the subject of the greatest discord and misery. On the contrary, if we add harmony of character to harmony of place, if we add to the embrace of God's physical presence the higher and nobler embrace of his moral perfections, then we have realized the true elements of divine union, and have become one.

8. "O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my down-sitting and mine uprising; thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but lo! O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thy hand upon me."*

Those whose souls are so far renewed that they can be said to have entered into this state of union, know practically the import of these remarkable expressions. At all times and in all varieties of situation, they not only have an intellectual conviction, but may be said to know, by the intimations of the heart as well as by reasoning, that God is with them. In company with others and in solitary places, in their daily walks and in seasons of rest and of innocent pleasure, in every situation in which they can by any possibility be placed, they have evidence of God's nearness and intimacy. And it

* Ps. 139 : 1, et seq.

adds to their happiness to know, that he is present to them in the fulness and perfection of his nature,—just as much so as if they were the only beings in the universe.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE GREATNESS AND SUPREMACY OF GOD.

Greatness predicated of God alone. — The greatness of God original, self-sustained, eternal. — Of the supremacy of God. — Relation of these views to man.

It is a principal object, in this part of our work, to obtain some correct and impressive views of the nature of the Divine Existence, in order to learn how man has separated himself from a state of union with God, and also to learn, in the methods and results of his departure, the necessity, the methods, and the results, of his return. The remarks which we shall have occasion to make, although it may not be entirely obvious at first, will be found, in the issue, to have an intimate relation with the great subject before us. Accordingly, we proceed from the consideration of the Eternity and Omnipresence of God, to a few remarks on his Supremacy.

2. "God only is great." Such were the concise but triumphant expressions with which Massillon, the distinguished religious orator, commenced his funeral discourse, on the occasion of the death of Louis XIV.

Never was a more correct sentiment uttered by human lips. And never was there a more appropriate occasion of its utterance. Who would dare to appropriate the epithet great to himself, when he, who had received it from a nation's voice for half a century, had fallen at the slightest touch of Providence? — the crown removed from his temples, the sceptre wrested from his hands, and his form changed to dust and ashes. That certainly

was a suitable time for a minister of God, whose business it is to measure the human by the divine, and to adjust the temporary to the eternal, to detach an epithet, which has so often been wrongly placed, from its human application, and to append it to *God alone.*

Massillon, in the utterance of this important sentiment, stands approved by philosophy, as well as by theology, by the decisions of human reason, as well as by inspiration. It is a sentiment which commends itself, not only deductively, but almost to man's intuitive perceptions, that there is, and can be, but one *absolute* greatness. All other greatness, if it be possible that there can be any other greatness, is greatness only by comparison. It is the greatness of the finite estimated by the finite; of the destructible weighed in the balance of the destructible; the greatness of angel measured by angel, of man measured by man; but it is not, and cannot be, the greatness of God. The greatness of God differs from all other greatness, in that it is greatness *absolute*, and not greatness *by comparison.*

3. Absolute greatness, in distinction from every other thing to which the epithet great can be applied, is a greatness which is *original.* It cannot be said of that which is absolute, that it begins. It has its origin and its life in itself. Its name, like that of God himself, is, I AM; that which exists, not that which *begins* to exist; that which lives, not that which *begins* and which *is made* to live. No being can say of it, that it is a gift. No being can claim homage for it, as the giver. As there is nothing from which it comes, we can only say of it, that IT IS. Self-existence is its first attribute.

4. Absolute greatness, as it is self-originated, so it is *self-sustained.* It stands, self-centred, without the aid of exterior supports. If it depended upon things exterior

to itself, if it rested upon a pedestal which other hands had placed beneath it, it would be subject to contingency. More or less of uncertainty would surround it every moment. As it asks no one's consent that it may live, so it fears no one's opposition. The power which protects it, is inherent in its own nature.

5. Absolute greatness is *eternal.* As there was no reason why it began, so there is no reason why it should end. The eternity of the past has its counterpart in the eternity of the future. And it lives in all time to come, because it has lived in all time past. To say that there is some element of decay in God's greatness, would be the same thing as to say that there is some element of decay in God himself.

6. In all these particulars, all other greatness fails. That which is called human greatness begins in time, and is terminated when it has hardly begun to exist. Monuments are erected to its memory, but monuments, as well as that of which they are the memorial, pass away. In the true sense of the terms, therefore, God only is great. And he is so, because in him greatness has neither beginning nor end, but having the true life in itself, it is imperishable. It needs no pyramid to perpetuate the name, when the substance is gone. It is itself its own monument, its own inscription. Absolute greatness belongs to God alone.

7. It is hardly necessary to add, that the greatness of God, in being absolute, is also *supreme;* and that God is truly *God over all.* If it is a greatness self-originated, if it is a greatness self-sustained and eternal, if it is a greatness which does not exist by comparison, nor admit of comparison, but exists out of comparison, and above comparison, it is, of course, *supreme.* It stands not more alone in its origin and its perpetuity, than it does in its supremacy.

8. And if God alone is great, if God only is supreme, then those only of all his creatures can truly be called great, even in the mitigated and subordinate sense of the term, who repeat in their own existence the true reflection, on a limited scale, of that original and unlimited greatness, which has its source and perfection in him alone. Never could there be a greater error than that committed by man, when he dissociated himself from the I AM. Every man, in the sphere which is allotted him, be it more or less, if he scatters light and not darkness, if he is a renovated and true man, and not a fallen and wicked man, must be what he is because he is IN and OF GOD. Hence it is a truth, which cannot be too often repeated, that we are great only as we are great in him from whom we came.

9. Oh that men knew what God is! With such views as have now been expressed, we are in a way to arrive at, and to solve, one of the important problems of existence, namely, to annihilate the idol and the superscription of false greatness, and to seek and to rest in the greatness which is true. Happy is the man who is enabled, by divine assistance, to adjust himself to the truth. He feels himself to be in the truth only when he feels himself to be, not the source of things, but the recipient; — standing with his face towards the Infinite, that its divine rays may fall upon him, and clothe him with its celestial beauty. Such an one, realizing that all which he has, whatever may be its appearance in the eyes of men, is from God, and from God alone, sympathizes with the devout language of the Psalmist: — "Thou art great, O Lord God, for there is none like thee, neither is there any God besides thee."*

* 2 Sam. chap. 7: 22.

CHAPTER V.

ON THE RELATION OF THE UNCREATED TO THE CREATED.

God the true source of all power. — Moral freedom one of God's gifts. — Of the true exercise of moral freedom. — Of the dangers of a wrong moral choice. — None good but one.

In the chapter on the eternity of God, we have already had occasion to intimate, that everything which is created necessarily has a beginning. But this is not all. Having no beginning in itself, but in that which is out of itself, everything which is created owes to that principle of causation from which it came, not only its being, but its *powers*. All existence and all power are in God; and everything which is not God has its existence and its power from him.

2. These views indicate, in general terms, the relation of the created to the uncreated; the relation of the creatures of God to God the Creator. It is not only a relation which implies a beginning, on the part of the creatures, but a relation which implies their continued dependence. The created not only come from God, but *receive* from God; not only derive their existence from him, but *everything else*. And, on the other hand, God, sustaining the relation correlative to that of beginning and reception, is not only the beginner of existence, but is the continual supplier of its wants. It is not possible, in the nature of things, that a being who has a beginning out of himself, should ever have anything *in himself;*

that is to say, by his own originating power. Whatever he has *is given.* This, as it seems to me, is one of those first truths, which, in being suggested by nature herself, are above and beyond reason. Created beings are not only created, which is a distinct act, and a distinct event, but in all time subsequent to their creation, (repeating here the sentiment which has already been expressed,) they are, and can be, *only what they have power to be from God.*

3. Let it be remembered, then, as a first truth in the doctrines of religious experience, that in all things *God is the giver.* Among the gifts which thus flow from God, is that high and invaluable one of moral freedom. In the exercise of that moral power, which is involved in the possession of moral freedom, men sometimes speak of it as their own possession, *their own power;* but they cannot, with any propriety, speak of it as a power which is not given. The gift of freedom involves the possibility of walking in the wrong way, but it does not alter the straightness and oneness of the true way. The laws of holy living, although they are and can be fulfilled only by those who are morally free, are, nevertheless, unalterable. Founded in infinite wisdom, they necessarily have their permanent principles; and God himself, without a deviation from such wisdom, cannot change them. In the exercise of their moral choice, it is undoubtedly true, that men may endeavor to live in some other way, and to walk in some other path, than that which God has pointed out; but it does not follow from this that there is, or can be, more than one true way. God, in imparting to men the gift of moral freedom, has said to them, Life and death are before you; but he has not said, Ye can find life *out of myself.* He tells them, emphatically, there is but one Fountain;

but having given them the freedom of choice, he announces to them, also, that they may either rest confidingly on his own bosom, and draw nourishment from that eternal fountain of life which is in himself, or may seek, in the exercise of their moral freedom, the nourishment of their spiritual existence from any other supposed source of life, with all the terrible hazards attending it.

4. But if God is the only true Fountain, those who seek any other fountains will find them "broken cisterns, that can hold no water." When moral beings, in the exercise of their moral option, choose to seek their support and life from any source separate from God himself, they necessarily die. It cannot be otherwise. Created beings, as we have already seen, are necessarily dependent on their Creator. They have no power of making that which is not already made;—no power of absolute origination. It is true they have the power of choice, but they must choose among the things that are. They must either choose God, or that which is not God. If they choose, as their source of life and of supply, that which is not God, they look for help to that which has no help in itself, for life to that which has no life in itself, much less help and life for another. They ask "for bread, and they find a stone;" they ask "for a fish, and they find a serpent." They are compelled to say, in the language of the prodigal son, my father's hired servants "have bread enough and to spare, but I perish with hunger."

Their freedom, invaluable as it is, does not give them the power of doing or of enduring impossibilities, of drinking without water, of eating without food, of receiving while they turn aside and reject the hand of the great Giver.

5. It is a truth, then, which cannot be too often repeated, and too earnestly impressed, (a truth necessarily resulting from the relation of the created to the Uncreated,) that there is and can be but one source of life. This is one of the great truths which the Saviour came to illustrate and confirm. It is in man's power, as a moral agent, as we have already seen, to turn from God, because God has given him power to do so, and to seek support somewhere else. But the necessary result is, if there be but one source of spiritual support, that he finds only deprivation and hunger, instead of a full supply, and death instead of life. For wisdom he finds ignorance, for strength weakness, for confidence fear, for purity impurity, for love hatred, for joy remorse, and for hope despair. God, in the fulfilment of his plan of supporting him in existence as a moral being, sustains and will continue to sustain him *physically*. In other words, making a distinction between the material and mental man, he does not deprive him of a natural or physical existence. But the life which he thus lives will be, and can be, only the receptacle of death. It will be the physical or natural repository of a moral corruption; a living and moving sepulchre. It cannot be otherwise. He has nothing to live upon but himself, or creatures as poor as himself. And, in the continual exhaustion of that which is not only limited in its supply, but poisonous in its nature, he lives a horrid and ghastly existence, and pines away with a death that never dies.

Adorable Jehovah! Source of all good, truth, and life, when will men discover the truth of the blessed Saviour's words, "There is none good but one, that is, God;" or say, with one of thine ancient servants, "There is none holy as the Lord—for there is none

beside thee?" * When will they learn that man, in his natural state, is "of the earth, earthy;" and that, in the things which are earthly and perishing, they cannot find an adequate support for that which is destined for immortality? When will they discover that FROM thee all come; and that IN thee all that live the true life must live; that, by an eternal law, which is not more obvious from revelation than from the light of reason, he who has not life has death, and he who has not God in his heart has Satan?

* 1 Sam. 2: 2. Mark 10: 17

CHAPTER VI.

SUMMARY OF SOME OF THE LEADING PRINCIPLES COMING UNDER EXAMINATION IN THE PRESENT WORK.

We propose here to give briefly a summary of some of the leading principles involved in the preceding chapters, and which, in connection with others flowing out of them, and perhaps equally important, will be illustrated in various ways in the chapters which follow.

I.

God has life in himself. He has it, but, because he is eternal, he did not and could not originate it. It is not life by creation, but life by *nature.* And as there is but one eternal and uncreated life, all other life *is, and must be, derived from the life which is in God.*

II.

As man's life, at his first creation, was not original and uncreated, it must have come from God. And the life which comes from God is the true life; and all life which does not come from this divine source, is false. So that, when man ceased to live in God, he ceased to possess any principle of life which was true. From that time onward, except so far as he is restored by the gift and infusion of a new life, he has only the semblance of vitality, but not the true vitality; the form of life, but the reality of death. The true life, the life of God, is not in him.

III.

Those who have fallen from the true life, and have become, in the language of Scripture, "dead in tres-

passes and sins," cannot restore themselves. Death, or the false life of sin, cannot originate the true life of holiness. Those, however, who are in this state may be made to understand the misery of their situation. Their power seems to be, not to restore themselves, but merely to perceive their misery, and to utter the supplication of their anguish and necessity.

IV.

When those who are fallen lift up their cry to God, he hears them. It is not in the divine nature to do otherwise. Unable to help himself, but able nevertheless to utter the cry of his helplessness and anguish, the unregenerate sinner finds help in God. As the true life is God's life, diffused from himself into all those who are born into his image, the restoration of the divine life in the soul is necessarily the work of the Infinite and not of the finite, the work of God and not of the creature.

V.

All true life is from God; — both the original life before man fell, and the life of the "new birth," when he is restored from his fall. But when we speak of the restoration of fallen man as the gift of God, we ought always to add that it is a gift *through Jesus Christ.* And it is in consequence of this that the work is sometimes ascribed directly to Christ, as well as to God. "In HIM," says the evangelist John, when speaking of Christ, "was *life,* and the life was the light of men."

VI.

In all cases, whatever may be the channel of communication, God is the original Giver. One of his great gifts to man, — a gift which was imparted at his first creation, and has never been withdrawn, — is MORAL FREEDOM. Our heavenly Father has seen fit to leave it to our own option, — a thing to be decided by ourselves,

— whether we will or will not accept himself *as the great and only Giver.* That is to say, the choice, and the only choice, which is allowed to man, or to other moral beings, is the choice of life from God or of life without him; — the choice of living with God present and operative in the soul, or of living with God excluded from it. It was not possible, so far as we are able to perceive, that any other choice should be given.

VII.

If, accordingly, in the exercise of moral freedom, and in the spirit of entire consecration, we renounce the life of the creature, and accept the life of God, by opening our hearts to the free and full entrance of his grace, then he will become the true operator in the soul, and will give origin to all spiritual good. It is then that God works in the soul; and, so far as this is the case, it can be said of such an one, in the language which the Saviour applied to himself: — "The words that I speak unto you I speak *not of myself, but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.*"

VIII.

The great truth of man's moral agency, without which he could not be man, but must be something lower than man, is thus recognized and established by his own voluntary acquiescence in, and acceptance of, the divine operation.

IX.

Man's moral agency, when he exists in full union with God, either in his original creation or in his restoration to God through Christ, is felt, not so much in guiding himself as in harmonizing with God's guidance; — not so much in originating knowledge and holy affections, as in rejecting all confidence in himself and accepting God as his teacher: — in a word, not so much in

willing or purposing to do whatever he may be called to do by an *independent action*, as in ceasing from everything which is not God, and in desiring and willing to let God work in him.

X.

At the same time it is true, that God, in thus taking possession of the mind and becoming its inspiration, harmonizes with the mind, not less really than the mind harmonizes with himself; namely, by originating thought, feeling, and purpose, through the medium of their appropriate mental susceptibilities and laws. That is to say, if it is true that God acts, and thereby constitutes a vital principle, it is also true that God acts in the moral and responsible *man;* and not only acts *in* the man, as the locality and the subject of action, but also by *means* of the man, as the voluntary and concurrent instrument of action.

XI.

It is thus that God, acting upon the basis of man's free consent, becomes the life of the soul; and as such he establishes the principle of faith, inspires true knowledge, gives guidance to the will, and harmonizes the inward dispositions with the facts of outward providence. In a word, God becomes the *Giver*, and man the happy recipient. God guides, and man has no desire or love but to follow him.

From that important moment, which may well be called the crisis of his destiny, man, without ceasing to be morally responsible, harmonizes with his Maker. If he thinks, and feels, and acts, by means of thought, feeling, and action which he has from another source, it is because he adopts that other source of knowledge, feeling, and action *as his own.* The two principles of life, the human and divine, are thenceforth united. The

prayer of the Saviour is answered: — "*As thou, Father art in me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us.*'

XII.

Those who are thus in union with God are necessarily in union with all that God desires and purposes to do. Especially are they in union with that great plan of redemption which the Bible unfolds. They can say with the Saviour: — "*My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.*"

It would be a great error to suppose that they are inactive, because they have their thought, feeling, and action from God. On the contrary, having those dispositions from God, which keep them in harmony with himself, they necessarily stand in the attitude of the most harmonious and perfect obedience; ready to do and to suffer whatever their heavenly Father requires of them.

XIII.

In particular, the doctrines of DIVINE UNION agree with and sustain the doctrine of the Holy Ghost, as it is laid down in the Scriptures. Not only patriarchs, and prophets, and apostles, and other good men, were taught and guided by the inbreathings and teachings of a higher Power, but also the Son of God himself; on whom the Holy Ghost descended visibly, and of whom it is repeatedly said, he was "led by the Spirit." The Evangelist Luke, alluding in the Acts of the Apostles to the visible ascent of the Saviour, says, "He was taken up, after that he, THROUGH THE HOLY GHOST, had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen." And this remarkable declaration accords entirely with what we are frequently taught in relation to him, that all his words and judgments and acts were first wrought inwardly by the indwelling power of the Father, before they were wrought outwardly by the manifestations of the Son.

XIV.

In accordance with what has been said, the first work of man will be to *restore himself*, or rather to cease from any reliance on himself, and to look to God, in order that a power greater than himself may do the work which has failed in his own hands. The renovation of himself, which naturally comes first in order, will not fail to be followed by the restoration of humanity in all its forms, particularly by the restoration of the family, and then by the pacification and perfection of society in general. The man, who has his life from God, will endeavor to restore and to perfect everything in its order; — operating in connection with the instrumentalities and arrangements which his heavenly Father has established, such as the Sabbath, the Bible, and the Ministry, and always humbly relying on the suggestions and aids of the Holy Spirit.

XV.

It is thus that men are truly united with God. But it is important to remember that the union, though based upon the consent of the party which is brought into union, is something more than a mere conventional arrangement. It is not enough to say that we belong to God's party, unless we can add, that we belong to his *household.* Those who are "born again," — at least, in that higher sense in which we use the expressions, — are not born into the capacity or condition of mere coöperators, or servants, — no matter how faithful their services may be, — but into the vastly higher condition of *sons and daughters.* God is the Father. They are the children. And they are united to God not only by the consent of the will, but by a filial nature, which is gradually originated in the soul by a divine power, just as really and truly as earthly children are united by a filial nature to their earthly parents. (See Part V., Ch. 8.)

PART SECOND.

ON FAITH, AND THE UNION OF GOD AND MAN IN FAITH.

CHAPTER I.

ON FAITH AS AN ELEMENT OF THE DIVINE NATURE.

Explanations of Faith. — Faith a necessary element of the Divine Nature. — Reasons for this view. — Reference to the Scriptures. — Operations of the principle of faith in the Divine Mind. — Its relation to love. — Of the excellency of faith.

God exists by the necessities of his nature. Perhaps, however, this is no more than to say that he has always existed. The fact is evident, but the manner of it is inexplicable. It is obvious, nevertheless, that, being what he is, he must have *faith* in himself as such. Faith, as really as knowledge and power, is an original element of the divine existence.

2. With God there is no time. The present, past, and future, are one. So that God, in possessing the powers or attributes of God from eternity, has had faith in them from eternity. In other words, God's faith is not only commensurate with the nature of his attributes, but is commensurate, also, with their duration. Before all time, and in all time, he has always had faith in himself as existing from eternity, as having all power, all wisdom, all goodness, all truth. Eternity, therefore, is

not more predicable of God's attributes than it is of faith in his attributes. Both, in being infinite, have the same extent, — in being eternal, have the same origin.

3. These general views can hardly fail to commend themselves to enlightened reflection and reason. Faith, as an element of the divine nature, is as necessary as the divine existence. If we predicate necessity of the one, we must predicate it of the other. The idea of God without faith in himself *as* God, would be something inconceivable, a contradiction, a nullity. It is the principle of faith, underlaying and supporting the action of the will, which not only constitutes the foundation of his unity, but renders his various perfections active and available in their appropriate spheres. God without faith would be as destitute of unity of character and energy of action, as man without faith. In human action it is constantly seen that no amount of knowledge will supply the place of confidence. The commander of a vessel, for instance, with all the knowledge and capacity requisite to guide her into port, but having no confidence in his power, and actually made incapable of consistent and right action, by unbelief in his capacity of action, takes a wrong course, and inevitably makes shipwreck. And, in like manner, the attributes of God would not enable him to conduct the affairs of the universe, if he had not faith in them as equal to the emergency. If it were possible for unbelief to enter into his nature, instead of being sustained by them he would be frightened by the extent of his own power, and would tremble in the presence of his own infinite justice. The weight of his attributes, unsustained by the faith they were calculated to inspire, and incapable of any profitable direction, would fall in, if we may so express it,

upon the centre of his being, so that he would present the aspect of an infinite imbecility, a God in ruins.

4. Nor is this faith, which God has in himself, as being what he is, the product of observation, or the result of comparison and deduction; for that would imply that there was a time when he was without it. Nor could it have been communicated from any source exterior to himself. There is no other God who could be the source of such communications. On the contrary, existing without being given, because the idea of its being given implies a time when it did not exist, it is what we have already represented it to be, something coëternal with the Divine Mind, a part of the Divine Nature.

5. There are passages of Scripture which indicate more or less explicitly God's faith in himself. "And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM. And he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you"—a declaration which, in excluding all uncertainty, and still without assigning any reason for such confidence except the reference to his own existence, obviously implies the fact of faith as an element of the Divine Nature. It was enough for Moses to announce that the I AM, the Divine Existence, had sent him; which, in being the true and original existence or life, could not fail to verify and establish its messages and purposes. The apostle Paul makes express mention of God's faith. Rom. iii. 3: "Shall their unbelief," he says, "make the *faith of God* without effect?" The faith of God, in this place, is sometimes understood to mean the declaration or promise of God. May it not also imply that confidence in himself which enabled him to make the promise? In the next chapter, the apostle represents God in the exercise of faith, as "calling those things which are not, as though they were." Overleaping the boun-

daries of time, and by its mysterious energy converting the possible into the actual, it realizes the future in the present and the non-existence of the fact in the existence of the conception.

6. Again, it is said in the Epistle to the Hebrews, "When God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, *he sware by himself*." Heb. vi. 13. An oath is an appeal to a higher power. God, therefore, being the highest possible existence, could swear only by himself, which, however, he obviously could not do, if he had not possessed faith in himself. In the same Epistle, xi. 3, we have the following remarkable passage: "Through *faith* we understand the worlds were framed by the word of God; so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."

If we understand this passage correctly, the import of it is this:—God, in the exercise of *faith*, namely, faith in his ability to create worlds, created them by his word, so that things seen or visible were made from things unseen. The context of the passage, when properly examined, seems to require this interpretation of it, although it is, perhaps, different from that which is generally received. The sacred writer, in giving, as it were, the genealogy of faith, begins *with God himself;* not only as being first among the "elders," but as furnishing, in the fact of creation, the most striking illustration of the definition of faith he had just given.

And undoubtedly it is a great truth, as the passage obviously implies, that God himself could not have orginated creation without faith. "Darkness was upon the face of the deep." The wide-spread and formless chaos lay before him, out of which an universe of form, of relations, and of beauty, was to spring to light. If he had been destitute of faith in his ability to give it birth,

the volition, the *inward word*, would never have been uttered. The most reliable knowledge which we have of mental operations, associating as it always does the fact of volition with the condition of antecedent belief, clearly indicates that it would have been impossible. But having faith, he acted, when the time of action came. He believed and he spake: "He commanded, and it stood fast."

7. With perfect faith in himself, God becomes a perfect administrator. He lays the vast plans, which are being accomplished in the universe, because he has faith in his ability to accomplish them. He sees the end from the beginning, and adapts the wisest means to the most beneficial results, because he has faith in his wisdom. He everywhere dispenses justice, rewarding the good and restraining and punishing the evil, because he has faith in the rectitude of his intentions, and has no fear in regard to any of his acts that wrong will or can be done by them. And, above all, it is faith in himself as having power in himself to sustain the right against the wrong, and to "justify the ways of God to man," which enables him, by mediatorial plans, which he alone can comprehend, to pardon the guilty and to do good to his enemies.

8. These views tend to elevate the principle of faith. If it is true that man lives by faith, it is not less true that God lives by faith. So that faith, as an element of the life of moral beings, is taken out of the list of things which are created, and is placed among those which are uncreated and eternal. It is a principle which has everlasting life. God, who could not exist without faith, lives by *having faith in himself;* and man lives by having *faith in God.* In marching in the high road of faith, we have God for our leader. We follow a captain

who is without fear; and that is the source of our own hope and courage. God's faith is as substantial and permanent as God is, because it is a part of his nature. Man's faith is substantial and permanent only as it elevates itself above the weaknesses of humanity and reposes upon God

CHAPTER II

ON FAITH AS THE CONSTITUTIVE ELEMENT OF HUMAN AND DIVINE UNION.

Of man's perfection when he came from his Maker. — Man created originally in the possession of faith. — Reasons for this view. — Of the degree or strength of faith, as it existed in man at first. — Man's recognition of God as his Father. — These views supported by the Scriptures.

All that man had when he was made, came from his Maker. And all that God made was pronounced good. It could not be otherwise. "Every good gift," says the apostle James, "and every perfect gift, is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." "His divine power," says the apostle Peter, "hath given unto us all things that pertain unto godliness."

2. Among the original gifts which God gave to man, when he came good and perfect from his Maker's hands, was that of faith.

If God could not exist, as the Creator, without faith in himself, so man could not exist as the created, without faith in God. Faith in God, at the time of his creation, was a necessity. That is to say, he must have been created, in the first instance, with the principle of faith, as a part of his nature. Additional to what is expressly said in the Scriptures on the subject, there are two reasons in support of this assertion.

The first is one which is derived from the nature of

the mind. Perhaps it may be called the philosophical reason. It is this. Faith, considered as the product of humanity, must necessarily rest upon the evidence of direct perception, in some of its forms, or of reasoning, or upon both combined. But it is self-evident, that it could rest there only on the ground of the antecedent acceptance of the credibility of the perceptive and deductive powers. Hence, the express declaration of the German philosopher, Fichte, namely, *that we are all born in faith.** It would be impossible for us to believe in the information which the perceptive and deductive powers give, unless we previously possessed confidence in them, as qualified to give information. And this confidence or faith, in them, it would be impossible for us to have, unless we had, at the same time, *entire faith in the God who gave them*

3. The other reason, that man must have been originally created with faith in God, as a part of his nature, is founded in man's sonship. The view is this. God, in forming man in the first instance, constituted him, not as a being made and cast *off* from himself, but as a being made and continuing his existence *in* himself; not as an independent existence, but as a related or filiated existence. In other words, God made him a *son.*

But this could not be done without some connecting principle. There can be no mental connection, such as is implied in sonship, without faith. Filiation, or sonship of mind, without the principle of faith existing in that which sustains the filial relation, is an impossibility. God, therefore, in making men his children, necessarily gave them faith. And this is obviously the doctrine of

* Fichte's Bestimmung des Menschen. — See Morell's History of Philosophy, on this subject, Part II. ch. 5, § 2; also a biographical History of Philosophy, by G. H. Lewes, series II., vol. 4th.

the Scriptures, that faith is not only necessary to constitute sonship, but is the *gift of God.**

4. Accordingly, man in his original state *believed.* To doubt was something alien to his nature. He not only had faith in God, as the originator of his own being, but as the Supreme Ruler, the "God over all."

Indeed, the propositions of God's eternal existence, omnipresence, and supremacy, are necessarily addressed rather to *faith* than to *absolute knowledge.* To possess, for instance, a direct and positive knowledge of God's supremacy, including both the fact of his supremacy and its infinitely various applications, would imply a knowledge not more limited than his own. But if the divine supremacy, as thus explained, is too vast a subject for direct and positive knowledge, it is not too vast for belief. If the human mind cannot fully comprehend it, (as it certainly cannot, in its particulars,) it can believe in it as a thing incomprehensible.

5. And the faith, which was given to man when he first came from the hands of his Maker, existed in such a degree of strength as to exclude doubt. Faith has its degrees. But if a man has a weak or imperfect belief of God's supremacy, he will fail to render him that sincere and deep homage to which his supremacy is entitled. There can be but one Supreme power. To doubt of God's supremacy, or to believe in it with anything short of a full and perfect belief, seems to imply the possibility of another ascendant power. In such a state of mind we know not whom to call our master, or whom we should obey. It cannot be said of such a being, nor of any other being in whom faith is not perfected, that he *lives* by faith. So that the sonship, in which man was originally made, and to which the

* Eph. 2: 8. Heb. 6: 1—4. Galat. 3: 7—26

renovating power of the Gospel is destined to restore him, implies, not only faith, but the perfection, or highest degree, of faith.

6. In the beginning, therefore, man, from the necessity of the case, was created not only with faith, but with faith existing in the highest degree. And faith, thus given, was the first principle of union. Man could not have been united in any other way. The faith of the heart inspired the utterance of the lips. The first cry which man uttered, when he came from the bosom of the Infinite, was, My Father; — a voice of filiation, and of love, which was not learned through the instrumentality of human teaching, but was inspired and spoken by a divine impulse.

And accordingly, it is said by the apostle Paul, in reference to the restoration of man to God, through Christ, "*We are the children of God, by faith;*" — a remark which evidently implies, that without faith we could not be children. God, in speaking of the rebellious Israelites, says, "They are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith."* Being without faith, they had ceased to be true children, and had become froward. And it is thus we are enabled to feel the force of that remarkable passage in Jeremiah. "And I said, How shall I put thee among the *children*, [or restore thee to the condition of children,] and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations? And I said, Thou shalt call me *My Father.*"† And in all cases the faith, which enables us to recognize God as our Father, constitutes us his children.

* Galat. 3 : 26 Deut. 32 : 20. † Jerem. 3 : 19.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE RELATION OF THE WORK OF CHRIST TO THE RESTORATION OF UNION.

Origin of sin. — Of man's condition when he fell. — Relation of unbelief to other sins. — Object of Christ's coming into the world. — The atonement. — Necessity of the atonement. — Its effects.

If faith was the original principle of union between God and man, as everything teaches us it must have been, then the opposite, namely, unbelief, or the want of faith, was, undoubtedly, the original principle of separation, disorder, and all sin. By the necessity of the case, when man ceased to believe in God, the tie of filiation was broken, and God ceased to be his Father.

2. The fall of man is summed up in a single sentence. He fell when he ceased to believe. In spiritual filiation, faith is, and necessarily must be, the primitive and constitutive element of the filial relation. It may, perhaps, be said, that it does not, of itself *alone*, constitute sonship, but it can certainly be said that it is an element, without which the constitution of sonship would be an impossibility. If it is not the whole, it is not only a part, but an *essential* part. And accordingly, when faith ceased, man could no longer say, "My Father." He of course ceased to be a son; and ceasing to be a son, he became a rebel. And when he heard the voice of God speaking to him, he feared him and fled.

3. From that sad hour how greatly changed was

man's condition! Before that time God rejoiced over him, as a father delights in a beloved child. "I live by the Father," said the blessed Saviour.* Such was man's life in the beginning. God gave him all things, and he lived without care. It is a great truth, which God himself has proclaimed, that the "just shall *live* by faith;"—a truth which implies that his life is not in himself, but in another. But when man, by ceasing to recognize the true God, made *himself* God, he no longer looked to God for support. "God hath made man upright," says the author of the book of Ecclesiastes, "but they have sought out many inventions." In the simplicity of faith, man was satisfied with what was given him, but afterwards, too proud to receive provisions from a father's hand, he endeavored to feed himself;—eating in toil and sorrow among the thistles. Under the sharp light of an awakened conscience, he found himself naked as well as hungry. In the state of divine filiation, God clothed him with the brightness of innocence; but when he sank into the nakedness of the creature, he clothed himself with fig-leaves.

4. Philosophically, then, as well as scripturally, UNBELIEF is the sin of all sins. It is not only the first, but the *greatest;* not only the evil of the world, but the seed or parent of all other evil. It is the only sin by which a man, who is in a state of union with God, can be separated from God in the first instance, although many other sins will follow from it. And standing at the head of the list, it is not more first in time than it is first in preëminence.

5. It was from the sin of unbelief especially, which originates and envelopes all other sin, that Jesus Christ

* John 6: 57.

came into the world to save men. Sin, under a perfectly just administration, can never be forgiven without an atonement. Mercy fails to be truly and beneficially exercised, when it fails, at the time of its exercise, to yield its homage to what is right. Hence the necessity of a mediator. We are taught, in many passages of Scripture, that Christ came into the world, that he was born, and died, in order that man's sins might be forgiven, and that God, in connection with forgiveness, might re-create the principle of faith, and restore him to sonship. "Behold the Lamb of God," said John the Baptist, "*which taketh away the sin of the world.*" "Christ," says the apostle Paul, in the Epistle to the Galatians, "hath redeemed us from the curse of the law." And again he says, in the same Epistle: — "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." "Christ," says the apostle Peter, "also suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps, who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live to righteousness: — by whose stripes ye were healed." Isaiah, in one of the many prophecies which are understood to have relation to the Saviour, says, "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows." And again, "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." The word of God, whether we consult its history or its poetry, its prophecies or its precepts, is full of this great truth. So that the apostle Peter, when "filled with the Holy Ghost," had good reason to say to the rulers of the people and the elders of Israel, — "This is the stone, which is set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in

any other, for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved."

6. The doctrine of the atonement seems to have a philosophical, as well as a religious foundation; that is to say, it will be found to be sustained not only by many passages of Scripture, but by sound philosophical inquiry. The conceptions of right and wrong, of merit and demerit, of reward and punishment, and of the necessary and fixed relations among them, are elementary in the human mind; — not so much the results of reasoning as connatural and necessary; and are common to all men. The human mind has never separated, and never can separate, the relations of merit and reward, of demerit and punishment. It is not more true that there is an universal conviction, than it is that there is an universal law represented in that conviction, that virtue is and must be followed by happiness, and that crime is and must be followed by misery. And it is a conviction not less universal, that God, as the administrator of the universe, and as the administrator and sustainer of the truth and the right, cannot and does not allow these important relations to be violated. It is not possible, under a perfectly holy administration, for the wrong-doer to escape punishment, and to be forgiven, except by means of an atonement.

7. Such, at least, on a thorough inquiry, will be found to be the general feeling of mankind. Feelings represent principles. And they do so because they spring from them. If man feels his need of some mediatorial agency in order to become reconciled to God, it is because he is secretly convinced, although he may be unable to analyze that conviction, of its moral necessity. It would be well for men who are given to philosophical inquiries, to turn their attention to this point. They cannot do it

with any care, without seeing how widely spread is the sense of sin, and how deeply men, in all ages, have felt, not only the need of reconciliation, but the need of some mediatorial power.

It is for this reason, that, in all nations, and in all ages of the world, offerings have been made, and burning altars have been kindled. It was necessary, as it seemed to men, that the offended Deity, under whatever form or name he might be believed in, should be propitiated. They did not then know, that the benevolence of God could be exhibited in connection with his justice; that God himself, in the person of his Son, would be the sinner's offering; and that the fires of human altars would be quenched in the blood of the incarnate Immanuel.

8. The atonement being made, God appeared once more as the restorer and new creator of the violated and lost sonship. Angels proclaimed the message. To all the world it was announced, "Peace on earth; good will to men." As many as were of a broken heart returned, and God gave them power to believe. Beaten by the world's tempests, disappointed and ruined in all their worldly expectations, they ceased to have hope in the finite, and turned their weeping eye to the Infinite. They found God by having faith in God, when they lost themselves by ceasing to have faith in themselves. Their necessity became the mother of their faith. In their sorrows they turned to him, who alone could give hope. The golden link, which had united the Father and his children in the garden of Eden, was reädjusted, and they became one.

9. But the faith which was lost in the Fall, and is thus restored on Calvary, is not a *dead* faith; neither is it a faith which is restricted to one occasion, or one pur-

pose. It must be, as it was when man came from the perfect hands of his Maker, a faith universal; a faith in everything which is necessary to be believed in; a faith which resists the attacks of selfishness at every point, and which sanctifies as well as justifies. The first act, connected with the renunciation of ourselves, and with our deep sorrow for sin, is belief in God's willingness to forgive us through Christ. The result of this act is forgiveness.

10. But this is not all that is necessary. It is God's "delight," as it is said to be the delight of that wisdom which dwells in him, "to be with the children of men." His heart is not isolated and unfeeling, but full of the spirit of communication. He not only loves, but loves to be loved in return. The desire of his heart is not, and cannot be satisfied, until man not only returns to be reconciled, but returns with the full purpose *never more to be unreconciled;* in other words, returns to *live in him.*

It is impossible that man should come back to be pardoned with no other view than that of starting on a new course of sin. Such repentance, if we could call it by the name of repentance, would not only fail to meet the claims of truth and justice, but would be adding the spirit of contempt and mockery to transgression. God cannot accept him, unless he returns not only a penitent son for the past, but with the humble and believing prayer that he may be a faithful and true son for the future.

11. Every man, therefore, who has a hope of reconciliation to God in Christ, can retain that hope only on the condition of a sincere purpose to live to God alone. He must be willing, henceforth, in the exercise of faith in the mediatorial arrangements and provisions, not only

to receive forgiveness from him, but everything else;—making God's will the guide of his actions, and God's promises the support of his expectations. He must be willing to be transferred from the dead life of self, to the living life of universal love; from the centre of the created, to the centre of the uncreated; from the hope founded in man, to the true and unchangeable hope in God.

12. Such is the restoration which Christ has purchased; not only forgiveness, but life. Forgiveness cancels the delinquencies of the past, but it does not give the "daily bread" of the present and the future. It takes away the heavy sense of condemnation, but it does not give the living spirit of holiness. It destroys the hell of the soul; but God alone can constitute its heaven. And God is in the soul, the inspirer of its thoughts and affections, to every one that believes.

Believe, then, that ye may have everlasting life. 'What agreement," says the apostle, "hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God: as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." 2 Cor. 6: 16—18.

OH BEAUTIFUL, AND YET UNKNOWN!

The sunbeam, at its noonday height,
Shines not to those who cannot see;
And what, to him who has no sight,
Avails the day that shines in Thee?

Oh beautiful, and yet unknown!
The sinner cannot see Thee now;
The veil across his sight is thrown,
Which shuts him from thy shining brow.

He seeks Thee, but thou art not found,
Nor shall he have the power to find,
While sin, that wraps its folds around,
Shall close the eye-ball of his mind

Friend of the lost, the sinner's friend!
Who only canst the light impart;
Oh Saviour! haste that veil to rend,
And pour thy brightness on his heart.

CHAPTER IV.

THE LIFE OF FAITH IN DISTINCTION FROM THE LIFE OF DESIRE.

Of the disproportion between desire and faith in Christians. — Illustrations of this disproportion. — The life of desire and faith contrasted. — Transition from one to the other. — Characteristics of this state of transition. — Instances of the life of faith.

In order satisfactorily to understand the nature of the *life of faith*, it is necessary to distinguish it in some particulars from the *life of desire*. It is by these last expressions that the state of Christians, in the more common forms of experience, may well be described. Undoubtedly the description will apply with still more truth and emphasis to those whose hearts have never been brought in any degree under a truly religious influence. Of Christians, however, as well as of those who are not so, it can be said, with too much reason, that their life, which ought to be more fully sustained by a higher principle, is a life of desire. If they will examine carefully, they will be surprised to find the great disproportion which there is between their desires and their faith.

2. They desire, for instance, those temporal things which are convenient for them, without exercising a correspondent degree of faith, and without looking, as they ought to do, to the great and only Giver of all good. They desire, with feelings partly natural and partly

holy, the progress of God's work in the world; but they have but little faith, certainly far less than they ought to have, that his work will be carried on. They have desires, perhaps earnest desires, that individuals, with whom they are acquainted, should become the devout followers of God;—but they have not faith in proportion to their desires. It is oftentimes the case that their desires are various, multiplied, and perhaps violent, when they are scarcely conscious of any degree of faith. Indeed, it seems sometimes to be the case that desires are strong and impetuous in proportion to want of faith.

3. This is a subject at which persons have not always looked with care. And it must be admitted that it is one of some difficulty. In order to understand it the more easily, it may be proper, in some particulars, to place the two states under consideration in contrast to each other. It will be recollected, however, that in speaking of desire here, we mean desire as it exists in those whose minds, in being but partially sanctified, are not in full harmony with God.

The life of desire has its centre in the creature. The life of faith has its centre in God. The life of desire has its origin in the wants of man's fallen condition. It is the natural expression, the voice of those wants. The life of faith has its origin in the fulness of God. It is the expression, the voice of that fulness.

The life of desire, originating in the creature, is bounded in its horizon. It selects particular objects, such as it can see, and appreciate, and cling to. The life of faith seeks nothing in its own will; but expanding its view to all objects and all relations of objects, it chooses, without knowing what is best for itself or others, only what God chooses.

The life of desire is variable. It takes a new appear-

ance, and operates in a new direction, with every new object to which it attaches itself. The life of faith is invariable, always exhibiting the same aspect and looking in the same direction, because the object which inspired it never changes and never can change. The life of desire is a *multiplied* one, because it seizes successively upon the multiplied objects of desire by which it is surrounded. The life of faith is simple, because, tracing effects to causes and losing sight of the littleness of the creature in the infinity of the Creator, it rests upon God alone.

The life of desire asks; the life of faith satisfies. Desire is the voice, the petition of the creature; faith is the expression of God's answer. Desire, restless by its very nature, seeks to accomplish its object by positive and aggressive efforts. Faith, in the consciousness of its strength, conquers by being in harmony with the divine movement, and by the attractions and power of its innate purity and repose.

4. In these contrasted statements, which, in being introduced chiefly for the purpose of illustration, are designedly made in a manner somewhat unqualified, we may obtain, if not a perfect, at least an approximated view of the subject. We now proceed to say, that in the progress of the soul's renovation and of its restoration to God, the mind gradually removes from its first central position in *desire* to a new and permanent centre in *faith*. And in accordance with this view, it will be found, on examination, that there is always a period, if the progress in sanctification is such as it ought to be, which may be described as the period of transition from the life of desire to the life of faith. This important and decisive period is characterized by two things, which are worthy of notice here.

The first is, that the desires, at first so numerous, are simplified and brought into unity. They may either be described as *lost in*, or, what is the same thing, as made *one* with the desire of the accomplishment of God's will. The language of the heart, whenever it is brought to this period in its history, is, *Thy will be done.* In the great and overruling desire involved in this language, every other inclination, every other desire, is harmonized. And it is easy to see that it cannot well be otherwise. The necessity of a simplification of the desires is to be found in God's nature. It is obvious that all desires, all purposes, must be made one with his, or they can never meet with his approbation. He can never fulfil the plans of any being which are distinct from and at variance with his own.

5. The second thing characteristic of this transition state, is, that the principle of faith will be so simplified in its action as to embody itself and rest in a single proposition merely; — namely, that God does *now give*, and that he always will give, to his believing people *that which is best for them;* — a result which will be fixed and inflexible, just in proportion as they are able, without asking anything in their own will, to rest believingly in this great truth. Desire, in its spiritual simplification, uniting all objects in one, says, THY WILL BE DONE. This is its continual prayer. Faith, simplified by the same grace so as to correspond to the simplicity of the desire, says, in reference to ALL WHO BELIEVE, Thy will *is* done. His people give themselves to God; — he gives himself to them. Their will is, that *his* will, and not their own, may be accomplished in themselves and in whatever concerns them. And as they believe in him as a God of wisdom, goodness, and truth, the accomplishment of it, whatever it may be, makes them happy.

6. These views aid in explaining some peculiarities of inward experience. Antonia Bourignon, for instance, speaking of some forms of prayer which she had been accustomed to go through, says, at a certain time, that they became burdensome to her, and difficult to be repeated.* Her mind, fixing upon no particular object of want or desire, was greatly drawn to inward silence. In her alarm she hardly knew what to think; but was inclined to adopt the trying conclusion, either that she had become indifferent to religion, or that God had abandoned her. She laid the case before God. The answer, which she speaks of having received, or perhaps more properly the conclusion to which her spirit was promptly led by a divine operation, was embodied in the concise but significant inward expression, "*Cease, and I will do all.*"

The import of this divine response was this: Cease from the useless multitude of petitions with which you now weary me; leave, in the exercise of faith, all your cares and sorrows and wants in my hands, *and I will take care of you.* In other words, it was the transition point from a life of desire to a life of *faith;* and, instead of being a state of indifference or declension in religion, was really one of great advancement.

7. These views explain, in part at least, some expressions which are found in Bishop Burnet's account of the religious experience and life of the Earl of Rochester; though the form of experience is a little different in some respects from that which has just been mentioned. In this distinguished but very irreligious man, the power of divine grace was very remarkable, after he had once learned the way of truth and purity. The turbulent life

* Parole de Dieu, p. 31. See also Boudon's Regne de Dieu. Livre III. Chs. 6 8.

of nature was withered and consumed under the blaze of holy love. In the closing part of his life, his religious state, raised above all anxieties and all ordinary forms of desire, was characterized chiefly by triumphant faith, and the spirit of devout and exalted praise. In admiration of the boundless goodness of God, he exclaimed, "Oh, why these favors to me, Lord? why to me? *Praise* is now my work. Oh, help me to praise him! I have nothing else to do. I have done with *prayer*. I shall presently stand upon Mount Zion, with an innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of the just made perfect. I shall hear the voice of multitudes, and be one among those who say, Hallelujah! Glory, and honor, and power unto the Lord our God!"

The experimental or interior history of the church presents many cases, which bear a resemblance more or less close to these, and which illustrate these views. Leighton, Ken, Edwards, Gregory Lopez, Guthrie, Brainerd, Carvosso, Payson,—all, in all ages of the world, who have attained *assurance* of faith, are instances.

8. Especially do the lives of the pious men who are mentioned in the Scriptures, whatever may be true of their desires, exhibit the predominance of this great principle. Remove the mighty attribute of faith;—and what would be left worthy of especial notice to the religious man, in the sublime characters of Abraham, Moses, and Daniel, of Paul and John? The Saviour, in particular, who is our great pattern, is the most perfect exemplification of the life of faith. It is true that in his state of humanity he had, like other men, the desires which are common to man's nature;—but these desires were always, and in all cases, subordinated to the desire that God's will might be done. "Lo, I come to do thy will." "Not my will, but thine be done." In this

overruling desire that God's will might be accomplished, all other desires were harmonized and made one.

But this was not all. The strength of the Saviour's faith corresponded to the simplicity and the exalted nature of his desire. His desire, checked and controlled by his confidence in God, never degenerated into anxiety, never changed to selfishness. Faith overshadowed and sanctified it. It was faith which laid the foundation of the perfect adjustment of his own character. It was by faith that he ruled both men and nature;—healing the sick, controlling the storms, and walking upon the sea. It was faith that gave him strength to consummate the mighty sacrifice which saved a world. In his faith, more than in any other of his mental attributes, was the "*hiding of his power*."

CHAPTER V.

OF THE UNION OF GOD AND MAN IN FAITH.

On the degree of faith necessary to constitute the union of God and man in faith. — Man should believe in God just as God believes in himself. — Illustrations of this view. — Inferences from the general views of this subject. — Faith the gift of God. — Faith the basis of knowledge. — Faith the source of strength. — Faith the basis of right action. — Reference to the Scriptures.

We have already had occasion to show, in one of the previous chapters, that faith is the constitutive element of human and divine union. That is to say, without faith on the part of man it is impossible that union between God and man in other respects should exist. Faith is the element which is indispensable in the formation of union; but the question still remains, what degree of faith is necessary?

The answer is, man will be united with God in other respects, in love, in wisdom, and in will, just in proportion to that faith which is the constitutive element of union; and he will be perfectly united in these respects when he is perfectly united in faith. And if the question recurs, when may he be said to be perfectly united in faith? — the answer is, when he believes in God with that unwavering confidence with which God believes in himself.

2. For instance, God has faith in his omnipotence. He has the power to do all things, and he believes that

he can do all things. The faith of that man, in whom the principle of faith is perfectly restored, harmonizes with God's faith, and he also perfectly believes that God can do all things.

Again, God has perfect faith in his own wisdom; never doubting in the least that he sees the end from the beginning, and that nothing is or can be beyond the reach of his knowledge. The faith of the man, in whom the principle of faith is perfectly established, harmonizes, in this instance also, with God's faith, and he never doubts, and never can doubt while he remains in this state, of the perfection of the divine wisdom.

Again, God has perfect faith in his own perfect rectitude, believing that he shall always do right under all circumstances, and without the least variation. The faith of the man of perfect faith harmonizes with God's faith, so that he never doubts that the omnipotence of God is pledged to the support of the right, and that all things will work together for the good of those who love him.

3. Man's faith, when it is in a state of perfect restoration, rests upon God's faith, as upon an unchangeable rock. The divine faith is eternal; it is a part of the divine existence, and is as unchangeable as it is eternal. And when the divine and human faith are brought into perfect harmony, the stable and divine character of the one is communicated to the other. God's faith, for instance, in his own truth is perfect. It never enters his conceptions as a thing possible that he should utter a falsehood. To believe it possible would be a belief in his own degradation and ruin. So man's faith, when in perfect union with God's faith, accepts undoubtingly God's truth; both the truth of his general nature, and

the truth of his specific declarations. The stability of the one is communicated to the other.

4 In connection with this subject, a number of remarks may properly be made. Some of these remarks have already been anticipated in part; but we wish to repeat them here, and to leave them fixed in the mind. And one is this; as God's faith in himself is not founded on experience, but, in the order of nature and in fact, is antecedent to experience, so man, in his unfallen state, does not create his faith by reasoning founded on experience, but being formed in the image of God, was created, in the beginning of his existence, in the possession of faith. Religious faith, that faith which recognizes and realizes the existence and perfections of God, relating as it does to things which must always be beyond direct human cognizance, is, and must be, a gift of God. And such, as has already been remarked, it is represented to be in the Scriptures.

5. Another remark is, that faith given is and necessarily must be the basis of human knowledge. To ascertain the basis or true foundation of knowledge, has been considered one of the most difficult problems of human philosophy. Philosophy, instigated by the pride and confidence of research, has sought for other foundations, but without success. It has been obliged, after long and earnest inquiries, to adopt the conclusion, humbling though it may be to the natural pride of the intellect, that all certainty rests upon *faith;* — namely, faith in our mental powers as the sources of knowledge, and also, and chiefly, faith in *God* as the giver of those powers. It is this principle, harmonizing precisely with the doctrines of the Bible and with all religious experience, which bridges over and shuts that great gulf in mere human philosophy, which separates the states or

mind from the knowledge involved in those states, perceptions from the objects perceived, the subjective from the objective.

6. A third remark is this: As faith is the basis of knowledge, so it is the basis of power. Power in the Divine Mind is rendered available by faith. Power in man rests upon the same basis, and man may be said to be powerful in proportion as he believes. It will be found true, in relation to all moral beings, that faith is a necessary element of existence. To believe or to perish is their destiny. All inquiries point in that direction. They must have faith in something, or they necessarily die. And if faith is necessary to existence, it is still more necessary to power and the manifestations of power. Formed in the image of God, the strength of man, like that of his Maker, rests on the column of belief, and his highest degree of strength is realized, when human faith is intertwined and made one with divine faith, and when he believes in God just as God believes in himself.

7. Again, faith is, and should be, the true basis of human action. As God never doubts, so he never acts in a state of doubt. Whatever he does is in full faith not only of his ability to do it, but of the rectitude of its being done. And so man, when he is in harmony with God, acts, and must act, in faith. When we propose to do a thing, and have not full faith in its rectitude and propriety, then it is a thing not to be done. We must wait until God, by his Word, Spirit, and Providences, clears up our way, and gives us faith. "Whatever is not of faith, is sin."

8. In the light and with the aid of such views, we can appreciate more fully than we might otherwise be able to do, various expressions of the Saviour, such as are found, for instance, in the eleventh chapter of the

Gospel of Mark. "And Jesus answering, saith to them, *Have faith in God.* For verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say to this mountain, Be thou removed and be thou cast into the sea, and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass, he shall have whatsoever he saith. Wherefore I say unto you, what things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."

True faith is the gift of God; and when it is given, it is just as certain that the result believed in will follow, as it is certain that God is true. So far as we have faith in God, we have a portion of the divine life, and, of course, a portion of the divine power. When the human soul is linked to God by faith, it is difficult to place a limit to its power, because it operates by moving the divine arm. All the miracles of Christ were by faith. It is not wonderful, therefore, that the Scriptures everywhere ascribe so much power to it.

Faith creates worlds, raises the dead, changes the heart, makes wise above human wisdom, renovates man's physical as well as his spiritual nature, "quenches the violence of fire" by rendering hurtful things unhurtful, "stops the mouths of lions" by reconciling the antagonisms and passions of the animal world, destroys the sting and the power of death, conquers Satan, unites the soul with God, gives everlasting life.

PART THIRD.

ON THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD, AND THE UNION OF GOD AND MAN IN KNOWLEDGE.

CHAPTER I.

ALL KNOWLEDGE NECESSARILY IN GOD.

General statements. — All knowledge first existed in God alone. — Proofs from the nature of knowledge. — Proofs fron the instruments of knowledge. — Of the instincts of animals. — God the soul or guide of reason as well as of instinct. — Of man's moral responsibility.

HAVING ascertained some of the more general principles which are applicable to man's restoration, and to that intimate reünion with God which cannot fail sooner or later to become, more than any other, the absorbing topic of the moral world, we proceed now to the consideration of the subject in other important particulars, — namely, union with God in knowledge in love, in will, in providence, and in the great work of man's redemption.

2. God being the TRUTH and the ALL, all beings who are in the truth are developments from himself; — not merely being in harmony with him by agreement or convention, but flowing out from him as from their source of life. The tree that stands upright and bloom-

ing on the surface of the earth, derives its substance, its form, its beauty, from the earth where it grows; but not more truly than every moral being, who is in the truth and the right, derives whatever is true and right and good in him from God, who is the only good. The tree is not the same thing with the earth;—it bears a distinct name and flourishes in a distinct form;—but the moment its root is separated from the great and rich bosom of its parent, it falls and withers and dies. So man is not God; if he were so, he could not have been made in the image of God; but the moment he is sundered from the Infinite Parent, by separating the golden link of faith, he too falls and dies. There is then no strength, no soundness in him.

3. In endeavoring further to show how the true and holy man exists in all things in divine union, and that he has nothing, and that, from the nature of the case, he can have nothing, except what he has from God, we proceed now to the consideration of the knowledge of God, and the union of God and man in that respect.

And we begin with saying, that, in the first instance, all knowledge necessarily exists in God. It is true that knowledge can be predicated of man as well as of God; it can be predicated of angels, and, in a greater or less degree, of all percipient beings. Of all such beings it is a necessary attribute. They all, in being percipient, not only actually possess more or less of knowledge, but they have their appropriate sphere of knowledge; a field of inquiry suited to their position and faculties; often a very limited one, it is true, but always really and truly existing. This remark applies to knowledge in all its forms, instinctive, intuitive, and deductive.

4. But, in whatever degree or in whatever form it exists, it is certain that it must first have existed in God

before it could have existed in the creature. The very idea of God implies that he has all knowledge; that nothing exists, and nothing can be conceived of, which is beyond the reach of his omniscience; and that he knew all that he now knows, or ever can know, *in the beginning.*

5. The nature of knowledge, also, indicating the divinity of its origin, shows that it must first have existed in God. There can be no knowledge without an *object* of knowledge, without something known, without a thing or existence to which the knowledge corresponds. But everything which properly comes under the head of *creation,* everything which exists, or can exist, is, and must be, from God. But if all things are from God, then the conception or idea of all things must have first been in him. All things which are created, were brought into existence in entire correspondence with the conceptions, or intellectual models, which are eternal in the Godhead. The forms of things can no more come by accident than the things themselves. Existences, in form as well as in fact, must be realizations of divine ideas. If, then, there can be no knowledge without objects of knowledge; and if all objects are formed in accordance with the knowledge of existence and form already existing in the Divine Mind, then all knowledge must have been in God in the beginning.

6. Again, all knowledge, which can now be regarded as existing in the creatures, and can be predicated of them, must first have existed in God, because he formed and sustains the instruments of their knowledge. The perceptive or cognitive powers, which they possess, are derived from him. He constituted them as the instruments of definite results; and, of course, must have known the results before he established the instrumen-

tality. So that he not only made them for particular ends, knowing the ends for which he made them, but prescribed, also, in reference to those ends, the mode and the degree of their action. All knowledge, therefore, is in him, because there can be no subordinate instruments of knowledge which are not from him.

7. Well is the question put in the well-known language of a popular English poet:—

> "Who taught the nations of the field and wood
> To shun their poison, and to choose their food?
> Prescient, the tides and tempests to withstand,
> Build on the wave, or arch beneath the sand?
> Who made the spider parallels design,
> Sure as De Moivre, without rule or line?
> Who bade the stork, Columbus-like, explore
> Heavens not his own, and worlds unknown before?"

In the comparison of reason with instinct, we would not say with this ingenious writer:

> "In this 't is *God* directs; — in that 't is *man*;"

but rather, in accordance with sound philosophy, as well as religion, ascribe *both* to God.

8. It is delightful to contemplate the instincts of animals. If there is not a Power controlling and guiding these instincts, separate from and above the animal where they reside, then the animal occupies a place in the scale of being far higher than is generally estimated.

Without hesitation would we subscribe to a sentiment to be found in the writings of the judicious mental philosopher, Dr. Reid. He is speaking of the wonderful skill and mathematical accuracy of the bee, in forming the cells of a honey-comb. "Shall we ask here," he remarks, "who taught the bee the properties of solids

and to resolve problems of MAXIMA and MINIMA? We need not say that bees know none of these things. They work most geometrically, without any knowledge of geometry; somewhat like a child, who, by turning the handle of an organ, makes good music without any knowledge of music. The art is not in the child, but in him who made the organ. In like manner, when a bee makes its comb so geometrically, the geometry is not in the bee, but in that great *Geometrician* who made the bee, and made all things in number, weight and measure."

9. So we may add in regard to man's reason. Man's reason, in its true and unperverted state, does not so much exist in man, as in that great *Architect* of reason who made man. God, and God alone, gave it its powers of perception and comparison; he established its laws of action; he adjusted the relation of its capacity and its results; and it is by his presence and guidance that it is sustained in all its just movements.

It is true there is a reason of which this cannot be said; — that reason which is *undirected*, the reason of the fallen and the guilty. But of the reason of truly humble and holy men, the reason of angels and all holy beings, it can always be said with truth, it is God's reason, — God is its life.

10. We are not ignorant that this view, like some others which have been and will be presented, involves the question of man's power and responsibility. It will be said, perhaps, that man was made independent, that his reason is his own, and that he alone is responsible for its exercise. We readily admit that there is an important sense in which these expressions are true. But is there any better exercise of man's independence, than by acknowledging him who gave it? Does he

alienate his responsibility by accepting aid from God? The fact of his moral responsibility is fully secured by leaving it to his choice whether he will live and act with God or without God. In making and acting upon that choice, — a choice which is constantly placed before him, — he fully sustains the rights of his moral position. But it should be remembered that the very fact of choice implies, where things are thus placed in opposition to each other, that, if one choice is wise, the other will be unwise; if one choice is right, the other will be wrong.

God made man, in order that, in the exercise of a free will, he might live *in* and *from* his Maker. This is the great truth of God and humanity. Accordingly, while man's free will gives him all that independence which is implied in the exercise of choice, it does not necessarily give or imply the least alienation from God. Undoubtedly he may undertake the management of his powers of perception and reasoning, if he chooses to do it, independently of God. But would it be a wise choice? — would it be a right choice? — would it be a successful choice? Does it follow, because God has said to man, — be independent if you choose to be so, — that he will make a choice so utterly unwise, so utterly destructive and wrong?

11. There is a difference between liberty and license. License is liberty *licentious;* that is to say, wrong, perverted. But liberty, in the true sense of the term, faithful to its divine instincts, always respects right and obligation. Accordingly, it claims, it asks, it receives, no exemption from God. It is very true that man, in the perverted exercise of his freedom, may choose to live without God. But will he, or can he, live a *divine* life when thus separated from him? Can he, in this state of alienation, possess what he ought always to possess,

an angelic nature, the spirit and life of Christ in his own soul? In taking his powers of knowledge out of God's control, he no longer has divine knowledge, and cannot have. If it be true that moral freedom, considered abstractly and with reference merely to possibilities of action, will allow us to take this course, it is equally certain that *morality*, the doing what is right and best to be done, will not allow it. On the contrary, what morality always requires us as moral agents to do in this matter, is, to place our powers of knowledge in the divine keeping. It is there that they are both rightly and safely placed. It is impossible, in the nature of things, that any being but God should entirely keep human reason from error, and direct it aright. Man, without God to aid him, is sure to injure its powers, or to prevent its right application. So that God is, and of right ought to be, the God of all true and right reason.

12. We will only add, that any other view would place man below the brutes. If they have not moral freedom, it can at least be said of them that they do not violate God's order. God feeds them; and they are willing to be under his care. God guides them, and they fulfil the ends of their being. A brute, under God's protection and guidance, is in a far better condition than a man left to himself.

CHAPTER II.

HUMAN KNOWLEDGE BASED UPON THE DIVINE.

God the former and sustainer of the instruments of knowledge. — Doctrine of Malebranche. — Explanations upon it. — Necessity of divine guidance in the use of our cognitive powers. — Distinction between knowledge and the truth. — Reference to the Scriptures. — Concluding remarks.

All knowledge, as we have seen in the preceding chapter, is originally in God. We proceed now to remark, further, that human knowledge is based upon the divine. In the Infinite Mind is the original fountain; — a sea of knowledge, wide, deep, and forever full. And from it flow out the streams and rivulets of knowledge into all created minds.

The view which thus connects human with divine knowledge, as streams are connected with their original fountains, has already been anticipated in part. It has already been said that God formed, and that he sustains, the instruments of knowledge, the various perceptive or cognitive powers, which exist in the human soul. But the subject remains to be presented in some additional aspects.

2. It is a doctrine of Malebranche, a French philosopher of the seventeenth century, that we may "see all things in God." Undoubtedly expressions of this kind are liable to be perverted. But if they merely mean, — the more we know of God, the more we know what is in

him, and what comes from him, — they convey a great truth. Certain it is, however, that we cannot see all things in God, while we ourselves are out of God. Our own relations to God must first be properly adjusted. As perception depends not only upon the perceptive power, but partly upon the position in which it is placed, we must be placed right before we can see right. Undoubtedly, if we place ourselves in the divine centre, and let our minds run in the channel of the divine radiations, we shall see all things in the divine light. If God "glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees," he must have realized them in idea, before he realized them in creation. And if we see them in the outward manifestation, it is possible also to see them in the divine centre. The universe is nothing more, and can be nothing more, than the outward letter of the infinite thought; the full-blown beauty of the central conception. The stars and the flowers were in the divine bosom before they were planted in the earth and the sky.

And this truth is universal. It applies to everything which is created. It applies to outward nature. It applies to man. It applies to all the powers of man. They are all developments from God.

3. But admitting this to be the case, and admitting, especially, that the instruments of our knowledge are all of divine origin, the question still remains, — in what way shall we rightly and successfully apply them? They come from God. Can they be sustained, and operate rightly, without him?

If it be said that we can properly and successfully guide them by means of our own knowledge, the inquiry still remains, — what are the instruments, and what are the sources of knowledge back of them, by which such guidance is thus secured? Guidance implies a guiding

power. A guiding power implies perception. But what, and where, is that higher perceptive power in man, which thus enables him to guide his faculties? Look for it carefully, — scrutinize the secret places of the intellect, — and you cannot find it, except in God himself, present and operating in the intellect.

We can come to no conclusion; we find ourselves reasoning continually in a circle, except on the supposition that God, in the person of the Holy Ghost, and as the spiritual administrator of the soul, continues to be present with, and to guide, the powers which he at first created. When left to themselves, or when guided by any supposed power in man separate from God, they rush continually into error.

4. The truth is, that any action of man's faculties, without the presence and inspiration of the mighty master of the mind who made them, is not guidance, but merely *action*. If man is in harmony with his Maker, he is in harmony with all moral truths and relations, and his faculties, under such circumstances, cannot fail to be rightly guided. Being in harmony with their Maker, their Maker becomes their life. If man is out of harmony with God, and just in proportion as this is the case, his faculties are not guided. They may be said to act, and it is action only. Sometimes the action is violent. There is the action of impulse, the action of selfish passion, the action of contradiction and strife; but there is no true *guidance*. The rightful authority, the authority which would carry them to their true goal, is in abeyance. Like another Phaëton, man has seized the reins of this chariot of fire; but the steeds know that it is not the hand of the true Apollo, and, phrenzied in the want of that mastership which they need, they rush wildly on to destruction.

5. In further support of the general doctrine, that all knowledge is in God, and that human knowledge is based upon the divine, we may very justly make a distinction, which is applicable in some cases at least, between knowledge and the truth; — meaning by the term truth, *complete* or *perfected knowledge*. And in this sense, whatever amount of knowledge man has, God alone has the TRUTH. From no other source can the truth come. It is impossible that man should have it, unless he has it from God. Truth, in the fragmentary form of parts, in which form it is communicated to all created beings, can never be known as truth, and authenticated as such, except by some being who knows it as a whole, and knows it as it really is, and is, therefore, in a situation to communicate it in parts. To us it must come in fragments, because our minds are not broad enough and deep enough to receive it in any other way. And this being the case, we can have no assurance that it is the truth, except so far as it comes from God.

6. A man, for instance, performs a certain act. He knows what is done, so far as the present action is concerned. But not knowing the relations and ultimate effects of the action, his knowledge is imperfect. He cannot be said to have the truth in the case, certainly not the *essential* or absolute truth, because that action, of which he seems to have a full knowledge, may affect, favorably or unfavorably, the interests and happiness of thousands of beings, and for generations to come. And of this he does not even pretend to know. It is impossible, therefore, that we should take a single step with certainty and safety, however inconsiderable it may seem to be, except so far as we take God as our guide.

7. Such are the views of enlightened reason on this subject. The Scriptures, also, are abundantly explicit. They everywhere assert, either expressly or by implica-

tion, that man needs, and that he must have, a divine guidance. Without such guidance men do not understand, they have not a correct appreciation, even of that which is directly before them. Without the divine light placed in the centre, it will always be true, as is said of them in Matthew and in Isaiah, that "by hearing they shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing they shall see, and shall not perceive."* During forty years the miracles of God were performed in the wilderness, miracles of the most wonderful nature; but there was no correct appreciation of them, merely because there was an absence of God's light in the soul, a want of the divine eye in the centre. Hence that remarkable passage in Deuteronomy: "And Moses called unto all Israel, and said unto them, Ye have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt unto Pharaoh, and unto all his servants, and unto all his land; the great temptations which thine eyes have seen, the signs, and those great miracles; *yet the Lord hath not given you a heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day.*"

8. Looking, therefore, at the subject in various points of view, we come to the conclusion, FIRST, that all knowledge exists necessarily in God; SECONDLY, that human knowledge, so far as it can be called the truth, or true knowledge, is based upon the divine. The fact is, that we can no more dissociate ourselves from God in the matter of knowledge, (understanding by the term, true knowledge or the truth,) than we can in that of physical existence. God did not create the body, which is the inferior and less difficult work, and leave the mind to create itself. And, on the other hand, man can no more create his mental nature than he can create his

* Matt. 13: 14.

physical nature. He can no more create the attributes of his mental nature, its powers or faculties, than he can create those of his physical nature. And if, in the exercise of the moral freedom with which he is endowed, he may make the effort, independently of God, to sustain them in their right exercise, the endeavor, however sincerely it may be made, will be found to be ineffectual. He will necessarily fail in all such efforts, because, in substituting the finite for the infinite, in resting upon himself instead of God, he has chosen means that are wholly inadequate to the result. The Saviour himself says, "I have not spoken *of myself*, [that is to say, by any source of knowledge or wisdom in myself,] but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak." Separate from God, therefore, we are separate from the truth.

9. How wise, then, is the man, who, adopting these great principles, renounces his own wisdom as vain, and seeks the true wisdom in God alone! The truth, or perfection, of man is realized, when, by his own voluntary consent, he has God in him as the central principle, not more truly of his physical than of his mental nature. He neither alienates nor violates his moral freedom by accepting God as his teacher. On the contrary, it is then, and then only, that he realizes the consummation of his liberty.

10. O Thou, who art the Truth, because thou hast all knowledge in thyself, and understandest all things in the end as well as in the beginning, guide us into the truth, that "the truth may make us free!" We have eyes, but without thee we see not; — we have ears, but without thee we hear not. "Incline our ears to wisdom, and apply our hearts to understanding."*

* Prov. 2: 2.

CHAPTER III.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE KNOWLEDGE WHICH IS FROM GOD.

The divine authorship of knowledge not determined by the character of its object. — Illustrations. — Knowledge from God susceptible of every variety of form. — Knowledge from God, a gift. — Is always in harmony with existing providences. — It changes its object, but never wanders from its author. — Concluding remarks.

It will be the object of this chapter to indicate some of the marks, or traits, that characterize the knowledge which is from God.

The first remark, in regard to the knowledge which may properly be ascribed to God as its author, is, that its divine authorship is not necessarily determined by the character of the object, whatever it may be, to which such knowledge relates. God, for instance, may be an object of knowledge; but it does not follow, that to have knowledge *of* God is the same thing as to have knowledge *from* God. The unbelieving philosopher, who explores the laws of nature, sometimes elevates his thoughts from the thing made to the Maker; but it cannot be said of him, certainly not in the proper and full sense of the terms, that he is a man *taught of God.* On the contrary, it is of this class of persons that the apostle Paul speaks, when he says, they know God without glorifying him as God.

Many persons have an intimate knowledge of the

Bible in many respects. They are acquainted with its geography, its history, its poetry, its doctrines; — so much so as to be in advance, in these particulars, of many devout Christians. But when we consider their unbelief, their immoralities, their practical disregard of the knowledge which they possess, we cannot with propriety speak of them as subjects of a divine teaching. The knowledge which they have is *from themselves*, and therefore is mixed with many errors, and often leads to the most unhappy results. The Pharisees, who were intimately acquainted with the writings of the Old Testament, and had a personal knowledge of the Saviour, seem to be an illustration of these remarks.

2. A second remark is, that divine knowledge, or that knowledge which is to be ascribed to God as its author, is susceptible of every possible variety of form. This remark seems naturally to follow from what has already been said. As the divine authorship of knowledge does not depend upon its objects, it follows that the knowledge which is from God is not limited to any particular class of objects, but is, or may be, knowledge upon all possible topics; upon things merely prudential; upon things of a moral or religious nature; upon all matters and things, whatever, which can possibly be the subjects of human thought. The thoughts, therefore, which God gives, are not necessarily thoughts of *himself*, nor of Christ, nor of the Holy Ghost, nor of heaven, nor of any particular person or theme mentioned in the Bible, however interesting or sacred they may be supposed to be. A man in a right frame of mind may erect a house, or may lay out and cultivate his fields, or may build and send abroad his ship upon the ocean, and he may say with propriety, (and, indeed, ought always to be able to say so,) that, in doing these things, or any other things,

he is called to do, he *is taught of God.* It is God's prerogative and delight to originate and direct a man's thoughts in affairs of every day's concern, in the practice of his particular trade or calling, in the matter of his farm and merchandise, as well as in other things. As there is no object of thought in the whole universe which makes the thought itself either good or evil, so the principle of thought, subject only to a divine guidance, is left free to range everywhere, and to select and to delight itself in everything which can be thought of.

3. With these negative remarks, that the divine authorship of thoughts does not depend upon the objects to which they relate, and, also, that it is not limited to any particular class of objects, we proceed to say affirmatively, that the thoughts which are from God, just so far as they have a divine origin, are characterized by the fact that they are a *gift* rather than an acquisition; — something *originated from the Divine Mind,* although it may and does have an inward and personal development. The man who is taught of God will be inwardly conscious, without ceasing to be conscious of his personal activity and responsibility, or at least will have an inward and firm conviction, that he is the subject of communications which are not from himself. And as the result of these interior intimations, he will feel authorized in saying, as Christians in all ages have done, "God hath given me understanding."

"We have received," says the apostle Paul, "not the spirit which is of the world, but the spirit which is of God, that we might know the things *that are freely given to us of God;* which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." 1 Cor. 2: 12, 13. In a very remarkable passage, which is worthy of the most serious

consideration, the blessed Saviour himself says, "And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak, for it shall *be given you* in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the *Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.*"

4. It may be remarked, again, that the knowledge which is of divine origin is characterized, in the second place, by always being in harmony with existing providences; that is to say, it will be found appropriate to the incidents of time, place, and circumstances.

God, being perfect, is always in harmony with himself. His acts are not discordant. If God originates thoughts in a man, he will always make them in keeping with the time, the place, and situation. The holy man, having his thoughts from God, although he thinks on a great variety of subjects, thinks just what he ought to think. He thinks of eternity or of time, of God or of the creatures of God, of himself or of his neighbor; and he thinks of each in the appropriate time and degree of thinking. And the thoughts which he bestows on what are sometimes called worldly objects, coming as they do from God, are not less acceptable to him from whom they came, than the apparently but not really more religious thoughts which he has in a place of worship.

5. Another, and third, characteristic of the knowledge which originates from God, is, that the thoughts which God imparts can never be said to wander from himself. It is true that they often change their objects; but the fact of a change of object does not necessarily imply an alienation or change of authorship. Varying with the character of the person who is the subject of them, and

with the situations in which he is placed, they diversify themselves very much, and attach themselves to a multitude of objects; but so long as it can be said of them that they come from God, it can also be said that they carry God with them wherever they go. They never wander from God. True to their centre of origin, they bear upon their wings, in their widest and most eccentric flights, the light and love of the Divinity. Like the bee that lights upon flowers of every form and hue, they find the honey of God's presence everywhere.

This is an important view to persons whose shattered nerves embarrass and weaken their mental action, or whose imaginations, naturally active and vivid, are not perfectly under the control of the will. Whether it be owing to too great strength or too great weakness, God will never condemn them for the direction which their thoughts take, so long as he is allowed to go with them.

6. We conclude this topic with one remark more. God, as the giver of thought, acts as a sovereign. He not only inspires and guides mental action in those who have fully given themselves to him, but he sometimes represses it. A God equally in the light and the darkness, he gives and he withholds as he thinks best. Nor should this cause us any dissatisfaction. A view of a thing which gives us only very imperfect knowledge, if it comes from God, is better than perfected knowledge which comes from any other source. It is sometimes well for us to be ignorant, in order that, having a sense of our ignorance, we may appreciate more fully the source of true wisdom. The ignorance of the intellect, when it is properly understood, can hardly fail to teach a valuable lesson of humility to the dispositions. Faith, also, which is excluded by perfect knowledge, may be taught in the same way. And whenever and wherever

it can be said of a man that he is taught of God, it can also be said that he is a humble and believing man.

"If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world," says the apostle, "let him become a *fool*, that he may be wise." 1 Cor. 3: 18. "The weapons of our warfare," he says, in another passage, "are not carnal, but mighty, *through God*, to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down *imaginations*, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity *every thought* to the obedience of Christ."

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE GRADUAL DEVELOPMENT OF DIVINE KNOWLEDGE.

The knowledge of God always the same. — Communicated to men in fragments or parts, and at successive periods of time. — The divine communication always modified by changes of circumstances. — Of the truths appropriate to particular periods of history. — Ushered in by appropriate preparations. — Illustrations. — The coming of Christ.

All knowledge is in God, without addition and without change. His knowledge, as we have been enabled to see in the remarks of the preceding chapters, is not knowledge by acquisition, but knowledge by nature. As knowledge exists in God by nature, it exists there without beginning and without end, and is as full and permanent as the divine existence is; — embracing and absorbing in its infinity all other forms and degrees of knowledge. God never knew more, and never knew less, and never knew otherwise, than he now does.

When, therefore, we propose to speak of the gradual development of the divine knowledge, which is the subject of the present chapter, we do not mean the gradual development of God's knowledge to *himself*, but to his *creatures*.

2. It is hardly necessary to say, that the creatures of God, however exalted they may be, are unable, from a want of mental capacity, to receive all the knowledge which God has. They can be the recipients of the divine knowledge only in part; and such is the constitution of created minds, that they receive the knowledge

which they have, not simultaneously, but in successive periods of time, and generally in small portions. And thus every moment, always commissioned with its appropriate message, reveals something new; furnishing, as it passes by, a new channel of communication, a new opening between the divine mind and created minds. And in this way God is revealed to us, if we are in a situation to understand and receive him, *moment by moment.* He refreshes us with the daily and continual bread of knowledge.

3. Ordinarily this knowledge is particular, and has relation to our own persons, and our own affairs; but it always comes to us with the freshness of a new communication, because it is always modified by the circumstances of the existing moment. The bright or clouded sky of to-day is not the sky of yesterday. The man of to-day is not the same man, nor surrounded by the same influences, nor the subject of the same providences, as the man of yesterday. There are forms or modifications of knowledge, appropriate to the conditions of youth and age, of poverty and riches, of subjection and government, and of other conditions, which are modified by the changes of each passing hour. The knowledge, therefore, which is appropriate and necessary now, could not have been equally appropriate and necessary in any antecedent period. It comes, therefore, with the attribute of novelty; and as it is necessary in order to the fulfilment of duty, it is always acceptable and refreshing to the consecrated and pious soul.

4. But God develops truth, which is appropriate to communities and nations, as well as to individuals. Some of the general truths, which are held in the keeping of divine wisdom, are especially appropriate, in the view of that wisdom, to particular periods in the history

of the world. The truth, both that which is particular and that which is general, though eternal by generation, has its announcement, its birth, in time. So that knowledge, as well as everything else, has its providence. The Saviour himself said to his disciples on a certain occasion: "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them NOW." The wisdom of Providence appreciates not only the thing to be done, but the *time* of doing it; not only the truth to be communicated, but the position of those who are to hear and to receive it. The announcement to the patriarchs, which confirmed the forbearance and goodness of God, inspired hope. "In thy seed," said God to Abraham, "shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice." The declarations of the law of Sinai, revealed in the terrible emblems of thunder and fire, disclosed the height from which men had fallen, in showing the purity and greatness of the God against whom they had rebelled. And thus, from time to time, there have been developments of the divine thought and the divine purpose, suited to the existing condition of things, and the gradually fulfilling destinies of humanity.

5. It is not enough to say, that every great moral truth has its appropriate time, as well as its appropriate character. It will be found, also, that every such truth, (and the same may be said of every great political and scientific truth,) will be ushered in by preparations and instrumentalities which are especially suited to it. And this is so much the case, that the truth cannot possibly come, at least it cannot possibly be received and appreciated as truth, independently of such preparations. It was necessary that civilization should advance to a certain degree, before the Athenians were prepared to receive and to carry out the truth involved in the institu-

tions of Solon. But as soon, in the course of Providence, as the preparations were completed, God constituted and sent forth the *thought*, if we may so express it, that is to say, the *legislative mind*, that was appropriate to the time and the mission. Whether the Grecian legislator knew and recognized himself as the subject of a divine instrumentality, or, being gifted with the possessions of wisdom, was ignorant of the God who gave and directed them, makes no difference as to the fact. And thus God has his forerunners, and his preparations, and his instruments, not only in legislation, but in science, in morals, in everything.

6. Romulus, the founder of the Roman state, was not an inhabitant of Judea, but was born in a region very remote, and at that time entirely unknown to the Jews. But it was necessary that Romulus, who sustained relations unknown to himself, should make his appearance in the world, that he should have his birth on the banks of the Tiber, and that he should accomplish his work as the author of new and important institutions, before Christ came. The Roman empire, which dates from the grandson of Numitor, was established, and extended its arms over the world, and brought all nations into one, in order to furnish a suitable opportunity for the entrance of truth into the world, in the person of the Prince of peace.

7. In the fulness of time the Son of God came. But he did not and could not come until all the requisite preparations were fulfilled. As Jesus came in his appropriate time, so he came with his appropriate mission. The messages of patriarchs and prophets, and of wise men, in various ages of the world, according to the light which had been given to them, had been communicated to the world. But the imperfect revelation of those who

had gone before was made clearer, and established with stronger confirmations at the coming of Christ.

"God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son."* God had a revelation of truth, which neither the circumstances of the earlier times, nor the imperfections of the earlier teachers, allowed to be made before. When the time came, the truth was made known. But it is to be remarked further, that in a world of error the truth cannot come into full development without a struggle. Those, therefore, who announce and illustrate the truth, are necessarily called to endure trials. Accordingly, Christ was a sufferer, as well as a teacher. Perhaps we ought to say, in view of the circumstances of his life, that he taught *in* suffering, and *by* suffering. Certain it is, that his message, which was spoken in tears, and sometimes in agony, was at last written in blood. In those sublime words, uttered upon the cross, IT IS FINISHED, men learned the memorable, the overwhelming truth, *of a redemption completed.*

8. In the teachings of the Saviour and his followers, uttered on various occasions, we have many important truths, not fully understood at the time when uttered, and perhaps not fully understood now, but which will be comprehended when lighted up by Providence, and when seen in the renewed and adequate preparation of the human mind. One of the great announcements to which we refer, is the truth of universal brotherhood, involving the cessation of war, and the restoration of universal peace. This is a truth which may be said to be written in letters of light on the pages of the Gospel; but the

* Heb. 1: 1, 2.

human mind, being thrown out of its true position by sin, has not been able to receive it until very lately. A century or more since, the doctrines of universal peace were proposed and illustrated in Europe, by Castel de St. Pierre, a learned French ecclesiastic; but were received with incredulity, and very much as if he were preaching a dream. They have been propounded again within a few years, and after the experience of an additional century of fighting and destruction. They now everywhere meet with a respectful hearing. It is the same in other instances. There are other practical truths, — truths originating in the divine mind, and flowing from God to man through the mind of Christ, — which have received a new development, and which the providence of God is holding up for a new and general reception in the present age; — the religion of Christ in its simplicity, the reign of the Holy Ghost, the relation of temperance to happiness, the universality of civil freedom, the rights of moral and religious belief, universal education, and in every heart a living and triumphant holiness, modelled on that of the Saviour.

9. God is moving on the troubled waters. It was thus in the beginning. There was a time when the beauty of nature was an idea, undeveloped and unrealized. Light existed in God, "but darkness was on the face of the deep." No sun was then, no star, no swelling and teeming earth. "The earth was without form and void;" but when the time came for the realization of the truth and beauty of the divine idea in material forms, then "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." The confusion of chaos stood rebuked; the light shone; the waters subsided to their place; the blooming earth appeared.

At this moment, at this eventful hour in the history

of eternal wisdom, the Spirit of the same creating God is secretly, but powerfully, moving on the troubled and chaotic ocean of humanity. The chaos, which is presented before us on every side, is wider, and deeper, and darker, than that of primitive nature, because it is the terrible chaos of moral rebellion. But here, too, the Spirit of God will be conqueror. He, who separated the contending elements of nature, and recombined them into forms of wisdom and loveliness, will not be baffled in his great attempt to erect and consolidate "the kingdom of God," out of the confusions of a fallen nature.

CHAPTER V.

ON THE UNION OF GOD AND MAN IN KNOWLEDGE.

Limitations of the general statement. — Union in knowledge involves three things, namely, union in the motive, the object, and the source of knowledge. — Results and encouragements attending the union of God and man in these respects.

The result of Christ's coming into the world, and of the sanctifying power which is communicated through him, will be to restore man to harmony with God in all parts of his nature. In an important sense it will be found true that man and God, who have been greatly separated in this as well as in other respects, will at last be united again in knowledge.

It should be remarked, however, that, when we speak of the union of human with divine knowledge, we do not mean to say that our knowledge, under the most favorable circumstances, will be as extensive as the divine knowledge, which would be impossible; nor that we shall be likely in the present life, (certainly not in the present period of the world,) to see the facts and relations of things with a divine distinctness of vision. This would be inconsistent with that injured and imperfect instrumentality of perception which is found in our diseased and dying bodies. But being united with God in knowledge, we shall see and know *truly*, though it may not be to a great extent. We shall know as God knows, and entirely in harmony with him, so far as he thinks it

best for us to know. Our wisdom will have its basis in his, and will rest upon his, in such a way as to constitute true wisdom.

With these explanatory remarks in view, we proceed to say, that the union of God and man in knowledge involves three things:—first, an union of desire or motive in seeking knowledge; secondly, an unity or oneness in the object of knowledge; and, thirdly, an unity in the source of knowledge.

First, there must be an union of desire or *motive* in seeking knowledge. The motive in which God condescends to unite, is a motive free from everything that is the opposite of God. It is a motive without private ends, without selfishness in any of its aims, a motive which harmonizes with God's character, with God's purposes, with God's glory. It was a motive thus pure and elevated, which always influenced him who came into the world to be the leader and guide of men. "My judgment," says the Saviour, "is just, *because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.*" John 5 : 30.

To seek the will of our heavenly Father, is to act, in all cases of action, without party prejudices, without private interests, without the violence of passion; but always with a sincere regard to the divine purposes. In this state of mind, which is most suitable for the constant presence and operations of the Holy Spirit, we may hope to be guided into the truth. It would be difficult to describe how easily and beautifully the light of true knowledge enters into the mind of one who is thus free from any influences except such as come from a regard to the will of God. We cannot then be easily separate from the truth, because we harmonize, in such an important respect, with a mind that lives in the truth.

2. In the second place, the union of God and man in knowledge implies the fact of an unity or oneness in the object of knowledge. That is to say, the object must be not one of our own choice, but of God's choice. And it may be added, here, that the object which God chooses and presents to the human mind for its consideration, is that object, whatever it may be, which entirely harmonizes with the existing state of things. The facts and relations of things are so ordered under the divine administration, that at each successive moment some things are more important to be known, and more appropriate to be known than anything else. God, as the true revealer of what now is and of what is to be hereafter, will help us to know only what he thinks ought to be known. He will not help us in the knowledge of those things which, considered as the objects of knowledge, may be regarded as inconsistent with the proprieties and wants of the present time and place, and of the existing situation of things. He will not help us in the knowledge of those things which, without a regard to the appropriateness of what now is, are sought merely to gratify a selfish curiosity. In all such inquiries, where we selfishly choose our own object instead of adopting and receiving the object which God presents, the human and divine mind are out of harmony.

On the contrary, when we seek to know only what God would have us know, which is always done when our minds perfectly harmonize with the intimations of Providence, then the object of knowledge becomes one and the same to him who imparts knowledge and to him who receives it; and God and man are in union.

3. And this view, it may be properly added, is the more interesting and the more practically important, because it so fully recognizes God as the judge of what is

proper or no: proper to be known. Sovereign here as in other things, he not only retains the right and the power of communicating knowledge, but of communicating what, in his own judgment, he sees to be best. It is obviously not possible for him to communicate all knowledge to a limited mind, that can receive it only in parts. Adjusting, therefore, what he imparts not only to the capacity of the recipient but to the attendant circumstances, he gives here a little and there a little: casting brightness around the skirts of the clouds which overhang us, mingling light with darkness and darkness with light, so that those who walk in some things in the day of open vision, may still be said in other things to walk in "*the night of faith.*"

4. Again, we may properly speak of the union of God and man in knowledge, when there is an unity in the *source* of knowledge. There is and can be but one true source of knowledge. Man, who possesses only what is given him, is unable to originate knowledge from himself. He can have no true knowledge, no true wisdom, but that which comes from a divine source.

The great Author of his powers, it is true, has given him instruments of perception, comparison, and reasoning, with which he can apply to the original fountain or ocean of truth, which exists in God himself. Through these instruments knowledge is conveyed from the source to the recipient. And it is not more true that the helpless infant derives its nourishment from the bosom of its mother, than that the soul, which is in full union with God, receives the nutriment of knowledge from God. All that such an one has to do, in securing this result, is to pray that God will direct the instruments he has made; — believing that he will do so in behalf of the souls who have given themselves fully to him, and who

have faith. God will not do this for the soul which has not laid itself upon his altar. Give thyself to God, therefore, without reserve, and in the exercise of a childlike confidence, and he, who has promised to teach men, will not fail to impart true wisdom.

5. It is in this state of things,—the state in which man is united with God in wisdom,—that we find the truth of that interesting passage of Scripture, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenants."* No longer a God afar off, he assumes a position of friendship and intimacy, and converses with them, as it were, face to face. By secret intimations, which are not the less true for being silent, he explains the doctrines of righteousness, and shows the signs of his coming.

6. And, we may properly add, it is in this state of things that we find one great ground of encouragement and hope. Knowledge is power even on human principles, and when it is infused more or less with human error. What, then, shall be the power of God's people, when it shall be said of them, in the language of the prophets and of the Saviour, "*And they shall be all taught of God*"?† "I will give you a mouth and wisdom," says the Saviour in another place, "which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist."‡ True it is that the voice of mere human wisdom, when assuming an adverse position, has but little power against the voice of God speaking from a holy heart. And when the heart of the church shall become holy, so that the voice of the church shall be synonymous with a declaration from the God of the church, then shall the deaf hear and the unbelieving be convinced.

* Ps 24: 14. † John 6: 25. ‡ Luke 21: 15.

OH, SEND ONE RAY INTO MY SIGHTLESS BALL.

Oh, send one ray into my sightless ball,
Transmit one beam into my darkened heart!
On thee, Almighty God, on thee I call,
Incline thy listening ear, thine aid impart!
In vain the natural sun his beams doth yield,
In vain the moon illumes the fields of air;
The eye-sight of my soul is quenched and sealed,
And what is other light if shades are there?
Beyond the sun and moon I lift my gaze,
Where round thy throne a purer light is spread,
Where seraphs fill their urns from that bright blaze,
And angels' souls with holy fires are fed.
Oh, send from that pure fount one quickening ray,
And change these inward shades to bright and glorious day!

PART FOURTH.

ON THE LOVE OF GOD, AND THE UNION OF GOD AND MAN IN LOVE.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE NATURE OF PURE OR HOLY LOVE.

Love has a nature of its own. — No love without an object of love. — Its nature is to seek its object without a view to reward. — Existence the object of pure love. — Its attractive power. — Pure or holy love illustrated in the Saviour. — All holy beings have this love.

Union with God in knowledge is preparatory to union with him in love. In the order of nature, knowledge is first in time; but love has the preëminence in excellence. As it is a principle nearer the centre of the soul, it attracts and concentrates in itself, if we may so express it, more of the soul's life. We proceed now to the consideration of this great principle.

Love, like everything else, has its own nature. Not identical with any other affection, and not explainable by the laws which are appropriate to any other affection, it stands by itself, in its own entity, in its own attributes and form. And being thus separate from every other affection, there is something true of it, which is not true of anything else. It is, therefore, a legitimate subject of analysis and description.

2. It is hardly necessary to say, in offering some explanations on this subject, that love always has an *object*. Love, without an *object* of love, would be inconceivable. It would be as difficult to conceive of such love, as it would be to conceive of an act of memory without something remembered, or of an act of perception without something perceived. And it is proper to add, that this object, although it does not necessarily exclude a regard to a person's own interests, is generally found in interests which are beyond and out of ourselves. Hence it is a common remark, that true or pure love is *self*-forgetting.

3. Again, it is one of the traits of love, that it does not remain quiescent in him who is the subject of it, but has a tendency (a tendency which is inherent, and constitutes a part of its nature) to move or flow out to its object, whatever that object may be. It is the object which indicates the channel in which it must flow, and which constitutes, also, the termination of its movement. Summoned into being by its appropriate object, it exists without effort; and, flowing in the channel which truth and nature have marked out for it, it asks no reward. If it expected or asked for anything, which might properly be denominated the recompense or reward of its own existence, it would cease to be love. And accordingly, if it be required to give a reason for its existence, (separate from that of reward, which it does not recognize as a reason,) it can only say, it loves because it cannot help it, or because it has a nature which makes it love. But such an answer, if it fails to announce a reason, at least announces a fact; a fact, which, if reason fails to prove, it also fails to annul. No one asks why the sun shines when it is above the horizon. And the light of love, like the light of the natural sun, when-

ever the appropriate occasion is furnished, shines by spontaneous diffusion. Love, therefore, is not a thing which rests upon something else, and which can be analyzed into antecedent elements; but is rather a life, a permanence, something essential, something which exists by itself, and does not rest on any other basis. And thus, being a life or nature, it acts itself out *as a nature*, without thinking or asking *why it does it;*—just as a man breathes, or thinks, or remembers, or imagines, without reflecting or asking why he does it.

4. We have already said that love necessarily has its object. The object of pure love (and we regard this as an important remark) is *existence;* all percipient and sentient existence whatever. So that love, in distinction from every appearance and modification of affection which is not true or pure love, may be defined to be *a desire for the good or happiness of everything which exists.* And, in accordance with this view, everything which has a being, from the highest to the lowest, whatever its position, whatever its character, the whole infinity of percipient and sentient existence, simply because it has such an existence, is the appropriate object of pure love.

This is a great truth, and one which, it must be admitted, is difficult to be realized by those who have not an instinct of perception and of affirmation in their own purified hearts. Those who are the subjects of this exalted feeling sincerely desire the happiness of all those, whoever or whatever they may be, who are capable of enjoying happiness, while, at the same time, it may be so, that they disapprove and perhaps even hate their character; and, accordingly, they love the evil as well as the good, sinners as well as saints.

Another characteristic of holy love is, that it is *attractive;* that is to say, its beauty is so divine, that, by its

own nature, it arrests the attention, and draws all things to itself that are capable of perceiving its beauty. It is not necessary for it to use efforts to produce this effect. This remarkable power is an essential power; something inherent in it. It has it, because it cannot be without it. Even natural beauty has something of this power. The flower that blooms by the wayside, the star that shines in the evening sky, attracts the eye of the beholder, and commands his attention. The power exists, though it may be difficult to explain it. And, if this power is possessed by natural beauty, still more is it possessed by moral beauty. He, therefore, who possesses the highest of moral elements, that of pure love, operating by that attractive power which is eternal as the love from which it springs, must and will be loved in return, whether he be God, angel, or man. All that is necessary is, that this moral beauty be clearly perceived, which, however, is never done, and is not possible to be done, when the mind is darkened by sin.

We have a striking illustration of the nature of pure love in the case of the Saviour. He loved sinners. "He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." It was not for angels, but for erring men, that he died. He bowed his head upon the cross for those that persecuted him, reviled him, slew him. He loved men, not because they were good, for such they were not, and certainly not because they were evil, because evil can never be the foundation of love, but because they were existences, — percipient and moral existences. He saw them created with the elements of an eternal being, but destitute, in their fallen state, of those attributes which would make that being a happy one. He saw them destitute of truth which they might possess, of holiness to which they were strangers, the enemies

of God when they might be his friends, the heirs of hell when they might be the heirs of heaven. He loved them, therefore, not because they were good, but because they had a sentient, and especially because they had a moral, existence. It was their existence and not their merit; it was what they were capable of being, and not what they were, which brought him down from heaven.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE SCRIPTURE DECLARATION THAT "GOD IS LOVE."

Of the infinity of God. — Something more needed. — God love by essence. — The subject argued from the relations he sustains. — Argued also from the rectitude or right of things. — Argument from the happiness of God. — Other views.

Having made, in the preceding chapter, some general statements in regard to the nature of love, we now proceed to consider it as existing in God. We must understand the relations of this principle to God, — in other words, we must understand what God's love is, before we can understand the union of God and man in love. And in doing this our attention is first arrested by the declaration of the Scriptures, — a declaration which is worthy of the particular notice of Christians, — that "God is love." It would be difficult to find a parallel form of expression. It is not anywhere said of God, so far as we recollect, that he is omniscience, or that he is omnipresence. It is true that the attributes of omniscience and omnipresence are essential to him as an infinite existence; but it should always be remembered that God is something more than infinity. There must be something beyond and above infinity, which shall baptize it with the character of goodness; otherwise there is no God. "God is love."

2. God is love by *essence*. That is to say, love is forever and unchangeably essential to his existence as

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God He was not at first, as some may be led to suppose, a mere percipient being, having all knowledge, who formed conjecturally an idea of love, came to the conclusion that it was a good and desirable thing, and then added it as an accessory to his original existence. On the contrary, God always had a heart; always had a true and effective sensibility, operating, by an eternal law of action, in the line of right and goodness. And if, by universal consent, the heart takes the precedence of the head, — if no greatness of intellect can elevate and save a man who has evil and depraved affections, — then God cannot be what he is, the infinitely desirable and infinitely good, without love as the central and leading element, the basis and the completion of his character.

3. The mere statement carries conviction in itself. But this is not all. We argue the matter also from the relations of things. God, considered as the Infinite, or I AM, sustains a fixed and necessary relation to everything which is. His relation to space is realized and fulfilled in his omnipresence. His relation to duration finds its expression and fulfilment in his eternity. His relation, as an infinite and perfect being, to objects of knowledge, is realized and fulfilled in his omniscience. His relation to percipient and sentient beings, to all beings that are susceptible of happiness, is corresponded to and completed by his *love;* or, what is the same thing, by his desire of their happiness. So that it may be said, that he is present to and envelopes time by his eternity, space by his omnipresence, all things knowable by his omniscience, and all percipient and sentient existences by his LOVE. And as there can be no God without eternity, no God without omniscience and omnipresence, so, still more truly and emphatically, there can be no God without love. Take away love, and then in dis-

tinction from the infinity of his natural existence, nothing which constitutes God, remains; nothing to give birth to happy existences, nothing to protect them and to secure their happiness, nothing to give them confidence, nothing lovely, and nothing to be loved. Take away love from the divine nature, and what would remain would be either an infinite indifferent being, or an infinite Satan.

4. And, again, we argue that "God is love," because, without love as the permanent and controlling element of his nature, the rectitude or right of things could not be sustained.

There is, and must be, in the divine nature, everything that is expressed in the word *ought;* everything which corresponds to the claims of right and obligation; everything which *ought to be.* That we *ought* to love existence, simply because it *is* existence; that we ought to desire, and seek, and love the happiness of all who exist, simply because they *do* exist and are susceptible of happiness, is an affirmation founded on the spontaneous intimations of the moral sense, and which, therefore, is antecedent to and *above* reasoning. It is none the less a truth because it is suggested rather than deduced; because it is given by its own impulse of revelation, rather than extracted by the researches of a power distinct from and out of itself. The right or obligation of things is a law which exists by itself, which discloses its own exigencies and proclaims its own veracity; asking no counsel or support from that which is imperfect or created; never going back of or above itself for another and higher motive of action; but standing alone, immutable, universal, and eternal. On this ground, therefore, we affirm that God is love, namely, because he *ought* to be. The voice of our moral nature, which is the voice of

God himself, proclaims that it cannot be otherwise. He loves, he *must* love, he cannot help loving everything which exists.

5. Again, God is love, (the attribute of love constituting the essential and controlling part of his nature,) because, without love, he cannot be a happy being. Whatever may be regarded as the true elements of happiness, it is certain that permanency is essential to it. And it is a great truth, verified by universal experience as well as by enlightened reason, that there cannot be permanent happiness, if indeed there can be happiness at all, separate from love. It is hardly necessary to say that indifference is not happiness. It may not be misery, but it certainly cannot be happiness. Hatred, which is the opposite of love, and which of course must exist, if there is neither love nor indifference, is not happiness. On the contrary, there are always painful feelings involved in and attending it. God, therefore, if eternity is essential to his character, and if love is the foundation of happiness, is either eternal love, or must be described in terms which are abhorrent in the very utterance, as eternal misery. But a view of God, which characterizes him as miserable, is inadmissible. Love, then, taking it for granted that he is and ever will be a happy being, is an essential part of his everlasting nature.

6. Again; love, by which we mean pure or holy love, cannot by any possibility exist in any but an Infinite Being, or in those beings who rest on the Infinite. Plants and flowers might as well grow upon rocks where there is no earth, as pure love grow out of the finite;—we mean the finite, standing alone and sustained by its own strength. Such is the nature of this love, transcending as it does all limited interests, that it claims

a natural and necessary affinity with the unlimited. All other love is bounded. Pure love knows no bounds. It does not ask whether the object of its regard is good or evil, a friend or an enemy. It transcends the restrictions, which are multiplied and piled up one upon another, of human passion and interest, and gives its affections without reward. Strong in its own divinity, it "*casts out fear.*" Fear, which has no place in the infinite, is the necessary law of inferiority, except where the weak are united with the strong. All beings that are not God and are not united with God, in neither being the source of things nor being united with that great and benevolent source, are condemned to selfishness by their position, and are condemned to weakness and sorrow, to fear and shame, by their selfishness. Having nothing else to rest upon, their thoughts and their love turn to themselves. Pure love, which rejects all such restrictions, they have not and cannot have. But God's love, growing out of and constituting, or at least perfecting, a nature which is infinite, and which in being infinite knows no partial interests and has no fear, reaches all, encircles all, blesses all.

7. The declaration of the apostle, that God is love, is not a mere figure of speech. It does not merely mean, that he can love, or that he does love in some degree. The expression is emphatic, full of meaning. Its import has already been explained. And we add here, it cannot be too often repeated, in relation to God, that love stands as the *centre* of his being. Far more than anything else, it is the essential element of his life *as God.*

It is true, it is preceded in the order of nature by *faith.* This we have already had occasion to notice. In the natural order, faith is the antecedent of love; and is also its necessary condition. But while it can be truly said

that both faith and love have their appropriate place, and that both are essential; it is also true that love, considered as an element of the divine nature, stands nearer the centre of existence, and contains in itself the motive or active principle of being. All other things are subordinate to it. Infinite space and infinite time are its locality; infinite knowledge is its minister and handmaid; the conscience is its guard, pronouncing within and without its moral value; the will executes its decrees; but the moving principle, the essence, the life of the infinite *as God*, that which gives inspiration to knowledge, motion to power, and impulse to the will, is, and must be, LOVE.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE LOVE OF EXISTENCE IN DISTINCTION FROM THE LOVE OF CHARACTER.

Illustrations of the love of existence. — The mother and her sons. — The wife and her husband. — Other illustrations. — Deductions from these views. — On the love of our enemies. — Without this love we cannot be the sons of God.

Pure love, as we have already had occasion to remark, is the love of existence or being, independently of character. Undoubtedly such love is remote from the common apprehension and experience; so much so that its nature is difficult to be understood and appreciated by most persons. Some further illustrations, therefore, — illustrations drawn from the situations and acts of those around us, — will aid us in a just view of the subject.

2. There lives in yonder dwelling a humble and praying mother, who has two sons; one of whom is eminent for his virtues, the other is equally distinguished for his vices. The virtuous son she not only loves with the love of benevolence, which is the same as the love of existence or being, but with the love of complacency. In other words, she not only loves him, but delights in him. His character, as well as his existence, commands her affections, and brings a rich reward.

But the other son is the son of her sorrow. He is deformed in person, ferocious in mind, addicted to unholy indulgences, and to all human appearance evil and only

evil. But, notwithstanding these unfavorable circumstances, the love of her child, separating as it does his existence from his character, never ceases to act,—never falters and becomes weary. She loves, by an element or law of her nature, just as God does; and can cease to love only when she ceases to live. She clothes him and feeds him, for which she receives no thanks; she bathes his throbbing brow, feverish with criminal intemperance; she returns kindness for unkindness, care for forgetfulness; never ceasing, under any circumstances, to watch, to pray, and to labor.

Deeply affected by what is thus presented to their notice, men concede at once and universally the amiableness and the attractive character of this high love;—a love above philosophy and mere human reason, and partaking of the nature of God.

3. Take the case of the wife. Her husband has become profane, intemperate, vicious. His kindness is changed to suspicion and hatred. He is the wreck of what he was once; and yet her love, kindled by the knowledge of what he has been, and of what he may yet be, remains unchanged. If his character is gone, his existence remains. If virtue has departed, immortality never dies. She sees his former life in ruins, but still it is a living ruin and capable of reanimation. And while there is hope, however feeble, she will not cease to call upon him to return.

It is needless to say, how much we respect and honor an affection so exalte , and how constantly and strongly it impresses us with a sense of its divine origin. We can see a reason why she should love that which is lovely;— but to love that which is unlovely; to separate between existence and character, and to attach our affections to the mere reality of being, simply because it is

being; and, whatever may be its relations of harmony or of opposition to us or to others, to seek, to pray, and to labor for its redemption to purity and to happiness, simply because it is susceptible of such redemption, and without thought of personal reward;— this is a love, of which reason, in being unable to explain it, can only say, *it is of God.*

4. Take the case of those individuals who have visited, aided, and blessed the enslaved and the prisoner, —the Clarksons and Howards of their generation;— men who have travelled and labored, in the language of Mr. Burke, when speaking of Howard, "not to survey the sumptuousness of palaces, or the stateliness of temples; not to make accurate measurements of the remains of ancient grandeur, nor to form a scale of the curiosity of modern art; nor to collect medals or collate manuscripts; —but to dive into the depths of dungeons; to plunge into the infection of hospitals; to survey the mansions of sorrow and pain; to take the gauge and the dimensions of misery, depression, and contempt; to remember the forgotten, to attend to the neglected, to visit the forsaken, to compare and collate the distresses of all men in all countries."

5. It is such cases, unexplainable on mere prudential considerations, which give us a glimpse of the exalted and divine nature of that love which flows out to existence. He, who has such love, has God,—God is in him· because such love cannot live unless it strikes its roo' and has its source of life in the Infinite. As it casts out alike all selfish interests and all fears, nothing but divine power in the soul could support it.

With such views of pure or holy love, it only remains to be added here, that it is right and reasonable that we should be required *to love our enemies.* There are no

passages of Scripture which have perplexed the unbelieving world more than those which have relation to this subject. "But I say unto you," says the Saviour, "love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you."

6. It will be noticed, that we are not commanded to love their *enmity*, — to love their detractions and ill usage, — but to love that which *has* enmity; the subject rather than the attribute; namely, their existence, their immortal natures. In the exercise of holy love, we may not only forgive them, but may earnestly seek their happiness; while, at the same time, we condemn their characters. Their characters may change, but not the essence of their being. Their enmity may die, but their nature is eternal.

7. We repeat, however, that this love cannot be exercised in its full extent, unless the soul has first passed into divine unity and become a partaker of the divine nature. It was this love, resting upon the principle of faith, which constituted Christ the true Son of God. And it is this love, resting upon the same principle of faith, which constitutes the sons of God in all times and all places. "Love your enemies," says the Saviour. And what is the reason which he assigns? "That ye may *be the children of your Father which is in heaven*, for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so? *Be ye, therefore, perfect, even as your Father, which is in heaven, is perfect.*"

CHAPTER IV.

THOUGHTS ON THE CREATION OF HOLY EXISTENCES.

All holy beings formed in the divine image. — The divine image in man constituted chiefly by holy love. — Such love necessarily the gift of God. — On loving God with the whole heart. — Remarks.

What has been said is perhaps all that is necessary to be said in relation to the nature of love, and the existence of love as a central element of the Divine Mind. Man must be born again into the possession of this love, and thus be restored to, and reassociated with, the divine element. And we shall the better understand the necessity of this regeneration and reünion, by considering still further what man was in the beginning. And our first remark is this.

All holy beings, inasmuch as they come from God, are, and must be, formed originally in the *divine image.* It is thus that angels and all angelic and seraphic natures are formed. They are miniatures of God. It is thus that man himself was originally formed. And God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. So God created man in his own image. *In the image of God created he him.*"

2. The likeness of God to man is not in *form*, for God is without form; — not in intellect, for the intellect of God embraces all things, while man can know only a part; — but in that which constitutes, more than anything else, the element, the life, of the divine nature,

namely, HOLY LOVE. Man, in the infancy of his existence, was created a *love* being. Love, as the centre of his existence, was not a speculation, but a nature; not an accessory of life, but the *life itself*. Spontaneous in its action, acting because it had a principle of movement in itself, it did not wait for the slow deductions of reason, but flowed out in all directions, like a living stream. As man, thus formed in the love spirit, looked around upon the works of nature, he saw all things in the possession of life and beauty, and he rejoiced in all things, because all things had God in them. He loved the tree and the flower, which reflected the divine wisdom and goodness. But far more did he delight in the happiness of everything which had a sentient existence. He called all animals to him. The birds dropped their wings at the sound of his voice, and came. The beasts of the field and of the forests flocked around him from their near or distant habitations. He loved them; and he gave them their names. When the occasion was presented, when the sentient object, no matter to what scale or degree of sentient being it belonged, was before him, his simple and pure heart flowed out at once.

3. It was thus, beyond all question, that the primitive man was constituted. Such is the representation of Scripture. Love, resting upon faith, was his nature. And, coming from God, he could not have been constituted otherwise. God being what he is, he could not have created man otherwise than he did. The principles of right, which apply to the fact of creation as well as to the government of things created, are not susceptible of change. It is impossible, therefore, to conceive of more than one pattern or model, according to which holy beings were at first created. And this one pattern, which, in being the true pattern, condemns and excludes

all others, is that of the Divine Mind itself. The model, in being perfect, can never be altered; in being eternal, can never be broken.

Holy beings are created after the divine model; but it is worthy of notice, here as elsewhere, that the existence, which stands for the model, is itself the *creating power.* — God is their Father. Man, in not being able to make himself, is not able to make that holy love, which is the centre of himself. On the contrary, holy love is a *gift*, as divine in its source as it is divine in its nature. It is just as impossible for men to originate, by their own action, the principle of pure or holy love within them, as it is to originate their own existence, or the power of perception and memory. Pure love cannot be created on the basis of prudential calculations; nor can it be originated by any other human device. Device, calculation, cannot raise itself to that divine height. And the reason is, it is a *constituent*, something inherent and organic, something without which reason itself, in its pure and unbiased forms, could not have been brought into action; something which does not and cannot by any possibility exist, except as a *nature.* In God it is nature *eternal;* in all other holy beings it is nature *given.*

4. Original truth is aphoristic. Its declaration is its argument. It carries conviction in its simplest affirmations. It is enough, therefore, merely to affirm, that the created must flow out of the uncreated; that the temporal must flow out of the eternal. God is the uncreated; God is the eternal. God, therefore, God alone, God beyond time, beyond and above all creating power, is the "living" or perpetual fountain. He has the true life in himself, and that life is Love. — All other life is from him and by him.

5. Hence it is said, in the language of Scripture,—language not more simply eloquent and affecting than it is true:—"My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken ME, *the fountain of living waters*, and hewn out broken cisterns that can hold no water."* And it is here, more than anywhere else, that we find the source o trouble with men. God, in creating men, not only gave them the principle of faith, but opened also the eternal fountain of love in their hearts; but men, in an evil hour, stopped it by ceasing to believe in the source from which it came. Satan, reminding them that God had made them moral agents, maliciously whispered that they would do well to avail themselves of their power by *hewing out cisterns of their own*,—in other words, that they should try to live as originators, and not as recipients; that they should try to live without living *in* and *from* God. They made the attempt; turned away from God, and, in striving to live in their own strength, found, in their sins and sorrows, that they had exchanged the living fountain for "broken cisterns, which could hold no water."

6. The doctrine of man's creation in the image of God involves, as one of its consequences, that, in his true and normal state, he loves and must love God with all his heart. And the reason is this. The law of love's movement, all other things being equal, is the amount of being, or existence in the object beloved. Accordingly, it can be said of love, that it notices and rejoices in everything which exists. It loves each insect that floats in the summer's sun; it delights in the happiness of the birds that sing in the branches; it wipes the tears and binds up the wounds of man, however degraded and fallen; but it is *God*, the *infinite Being*, who represents in him-

* Jer. 2: 13.

self all other existences, that supremely attracts and absorbs it. In him all love centres, as all streams and waters centre in the parent ocean. In God, uniting and consolidating all things in himself, we love the infinitude of being, the Life of the universe, the everywhere present, the silent but universal Operator, the All-in-all.

CHAPTER V.

ON THE THREE FORMS OF LOVE: NAMELY, OF BENEVOLENCE, OF COMPLACENCY, AND OF UNION.

Explanations of the love of benevolence. — Benevolential love not necessarily unitive. — Illustrations. — Complacential love. — Illustrations — Unitive love. — Results of unitive love.

THE love of existence, simply because it is existence and in being existence, is susceptible of happiness, is the basis of all other love. This love is sometimes denominated in writers, in consideration of its nature rather than its object, the love of benevolence, or benevolential love. Eternal in the divine mind, operating by its own nature, being in itself and of itself a living principle, it is properly called a LIFE. And it is this immortal life, this central and eternal impulse of the divinity, which elevates and expands the Godhead from a mere infinity of power and wisdom to an infinity of moral perfection. Of the value of this love, and its indispensable nature to God and to all beings created in the likeness of God, it is difficult to form too high an estimate. First in time, it is preëminent in importance. We say everything which can well be said, when we speak of it as their LIFE.

2. It is worthy of notice, however, that this love, which is sometimes known under the denomination of love of benevolence or benevolential love, in distinction from the love of complacency or complacential love, *is*

not unitive. That is to say, it does not, and cannot of itself, constitute an union between him who loves and the object that is beloved. It is hardly necessary to say, that there can be no union unless there are two or more beings to be united. And it is hardly less obvious, that no union can be effected without a correspondence of feeling in those who are the subjects of such union. Love and union, therefore, are not identical, and are not, in all cases, necessarily related. The history of the Saviour, who suffered death in attempting to do good to men, has shown us that we may love where there is only distrust or hatred in return. Often is this the case. Year after year, man may entertain the kindest and most benevolent feelings towards others; he may labor for them and suffer for them; and instead of the delightful approach and unity of love, find nothing but feelings of ingratitude and deep aversion.

3. Complacential love, based upon that of benevolence, or the love of simple existence, adds to the love of the object an approbation of its character. This last circumstance constitutes, it is obvious, an important modification of the affection under consideration. We desire, for instance, the good and happiness of the just man. That is to say, we love him. And we do so, both because he is a man, and also because he is just. The love of him as a just man, which turns upon the fact of his character, is added to and increases our love of him as a man, which turns upon the fact of his being, or existence. Again, we desire the good and happiness of angels, on the ground of their existence and susceptibility of happiness, just as we desire the happiness of the worst sinners for the same reason. In other words, we love them with the love of benevolence. But the purity of an angel's character furnishes a new element, or

rather basis of love;—so that we heighten the love of their existence, which is the foundation, by that of their moral excellence, which may be regarded as an accessory, but beautiful superstructure. In the case of angels, as in the case of the just man, we love both existence and character. In the case of those sinners in whom we discover no good moral elements, we love their existence, *notwithstanding* their character, and in opposition to its repelling influence. And in both cases, if our love exists without regard to personal reward, it is properly denominated *pure love.*

4. Unitive love, in implying the fact of something united, cannot exist without two or more persons, or beings, who are the subjects of it. Such love, especially when it results in the highest degree of union, implies and involves the existence of complacential love, added to that of benevolence. The parties who are the subjects of unitive love, must approve and honor, as well as love, each other, before they can enter into such union. Their approbation must be mutual; and mutual approbation can hardly be expected to exist without a similarity of character. A likeness of character is not essential to all love, but it obviously is to that proximity and oneness of heart which constitutes the modification of unitive love. And the degree of mutual likeness of character will be the measure of the degree of union or oneness. If the union is perfect, the character in both cases must have a moral or religious perfection;—that is to say, the character in both cases must be that of pure or holy love. Love and selfishness cannot mingle together. Whenever two or more existences, filled with the spirit of pure love, approach each other, so as to come within the sphere of each other's knowledge, and thus form a mutual acquaintance, they not only have feelings of

complacency and approval, but at once form the most intimate association. It is not so much a matter of volition as a law of nature. They cannot stay apart if they would. By their nature they are reciprocally attractive. They are born into the same image; and in the innate consciousness of the loveliness of their individual characters, they cannot help loving that which bears the image and reflects the resemblance of themselves. Children of the same lineage, and baptized in the same pure waters, they rush into each other's embrace, as a mother, recognizing her own lineaments in a child long lost, but at last restored again, rushes into its arms, not by the movement of mere reason, but by the spontaneity of a true and permanent life.

5. These views apply to the relations between God and man, as well as to those between man and his fellow-man. When the soul, divested of selfishness, is born into the state of pure love, it is then regenerated into the image of God. The two existences, the human and the divine, are alike, with the exception that one is created, the other uncreated; one is the copy, the other the original. In connection with a mutual likeness of nature, there cannot fail to be a mutual tendency to union. So that God, and the child of God, are drawn towards each other, and are united and absorbed, as it were, the less in the greater, not only by the law of filiation, but by the law of attraction *involved in the fact of mutual resemblance.*

6. There is nothing arbitrary or accidental in God's moral kingdom; nothing which violates responsibility and truth. Everything, in being established in the truth, is established in the wisdom of permanent law or nature; and nothing exists or is done by unreasonable will or by unmeaning chance. The love of union, which draws

together and makes kindred spirits into one, has its nature. It loves existences, because it desires to make them good; it both loves them and unites with them when they are made good. It has its nature; it has its triumphs also. It is triumphant, both because it conquers by the might of its attractive power, and also because it is happy. The union of souls, under the circumstances which have been mentioned, cannot fail to constitute the highest happiness. They do not love in order to be happy; but they are happy because they love. The union of holy souls in love is the nuptials of the spirit. Their happiness is as bright and as pure as the love from which it flows. Extracted from the exhaustless mine which constitutes God's happiness, it is indeed the pearl of great price; the gem which illustrates the walls of the New Jerusalem.

7. Thus among holy beings there is one great circle of relationship. Love alone, in its mighty power, works out the problem of universal harmony. The fact of holiness, which is but another name for pure or holy love, constitutes a bond of union; reaching all, encircling all, beautifying all. Those in the same rank of being are attracted to each other; and all are attracted to that which is higher in rank; not only loving, but united in love; and united each in his place and order, on the combined principle of extent of being and perfection of character. So that the result is — *God in all, and all in God;* the Father in Christ, and Christ in those who are begotten of him; mutually bound together and living in each other; no more separated in fact, and no more capable of being separated from each other than the rays of the light are separated or capable of being separated from the natural sun.

CHAPTER VI.

ON THE UNION OF GOD AND MAN IN LOVE.

Necessity of union in love. — The love of God and man in union must have the same origin. — Must also have a likeness of nature. — Must be subjected to a divine regulation. — Illustrations. — Remarks.

The union of God and man, on which is founded the realization of all excellence and virtue, necessarily involves the fact of union in *love*. It is very true that complete or perfect unity between God and man implies union in other respects. All that has been previously said goes to show that this is the case. There may be, for instance, in addition to the union of love, an union of knowledge or wisdom, which, in the order of nature, precedes that of love. Or there may be an union of the human and divine will, which, in the order of nature, follows that of love. There not only *may* be such unions in a perfectly restored state of the human mind, but there must be. But of all the various forms of union which exist, or may be supposed to exist, there is none so important and indispensable as that of love. Even that of faith is subordinate to it. For, although the union of faith is necessarily antecedent, and is indispensable, it would be of no avail without the higher and more central union of love, which follows it.

Some references were made to the union of God and man in love in the preceding chapter. But we propose

to resume the subject here, and make some further remarks.

The union of God and man in love implies a number of things. It implies, in the first place, that the love which thus unites them shall have the same origin. The two streams must flow from the same fountain. God's love is in and from himself. Man's love, in order to be in harmony with it, must be in and from God also. It is impossible that the pure or perfect love which "loves God with all the heart, and our neighbor as ourselves," should rest on any other than a divine and infinite basis. It is of a nature so high, flowing out freely and cheerfully even to those "who hate us and despitefully use us," that it requires and can accept nothing less than God for its author and supporter. This sentiment we have already expressed; but it is so important that it will bear repetition. Man has not strength enough to sustain himself in the exercise of pure love, breathing out, as it does, its aspirations of benevolence towards its enemies, except so far as he rests upon God, and becomes a "partaker of the divine nature."

2. The union of God and man in love implies, in the second place, that man's love must not only be from God so as to be nothing more or less than a stream from the everlasting fountain, but it must flow out without adulteration or modification — in other words, it must be *like God's love.*

If we analyze these subjects carefully, especially in the light of a holy experience, we shall find that God's love, as it existed in the primitive and uncreated form, and before any beings were created by him, was, and must have been, of that kind which is termed *benevolential.* And this love, as it exists in him now, which

consists in a sincere desire for the happiness of all beings, simply because they have a being or existence susceptible of happiness, is now, and always will be, the original and basis of all other true love. It was this love, which, in the bosom of eternity, prompted the plan of salvation. We cannot experience the blessed state of perfect union with God in love, unless our hearts are filled with a love of this kind. Our love must not only have its origin in the divine nature, in God himself, but must be *like his.* So that it should be our constant prayer, that God would give us a *love-nature*, which, in being kindled from the eternal fire, will burn of itself; which will send out its divine blaze in the midst of persecutions; and which "many waters cannot quench."

3. Again, the union of God and man in love implies that man's love, in its particular directions, namely, as it flows out to his fellow-men in general, or to particular classes of persons, or to any created objects whatever, must be subjected to *a divine regulation.* In other words, it is to be regarded as a fundamental principle in the life of God in the soul, and in the doctrines of divine union, that God must not only give us the power to love, but that he must tell us whom to love. We have no more right to say whom we shall love out of God, than we have to do anything else out of God. In our character of dependent creatures, who have nothing of our own, and who do not know how to use even that which is given us, we have no other resource but to trust God equally for the gift and for the regulation of it. And this is particularly true as respects the affection which we are now considering. Love is not only the highest, the most ennobling, and the most sacred principle of our nature, but it is the most powerful. All history, religious as well as profane, is a testimony to

the immensity of its power. Whether for good or for evil, it is the true life of the soul; making it satanic by its alliance with Satan, or divine by its participation in God. Such a principle, which carries with it immortal destinies, should enfold God in it, not only as the source of its life, but as the guide of its movements.

4. Undoubtedly it is the nature, or perhaps we should rather say, the natural *tendency*, of holy love, in its benevolential form, to extend itself in every direction, and to all beings. All that is wanting is an *occasion* for its operation, and such is its nature that it will operate of itself. But a distinction may easily be made between a tendency of the mind and a direction of that tendency. It is the tendency of all rivers to flow to the ocean, but they do not flow there in a straight line; on the contrary, they are continually diversified in accordance with the laws of nature. The rule, applicable in this case to a holy mind, is, that we must leave this tendency under the direction of Providence, and not direct it in our own will. It is true we cannot rightfully be deprived of our own choice; but we are bound to make a *right* choice, and our choice ought always to be, to let the movements of our hearts be guided by God's choice. The will of the creature is as disastrous here as anywhere else. Let our love, then, flow where Providence indicates that it ought to flow. God, who reveals himself in his providences, and acts through them, and God only, should choose for us.

5. But supposing that the Providence of God places before us, as the objects of our love, those who are exceedingly depraved and vicious, are we bound to love them in that case? Most certainly we are. They are appropriate objects of the love of benevolence; although they are not so of complacential love or of unitive

love. And benevolential love, which loves existences simply because they have an existence, is the primitive form of love, and the basis of all other forms. This is the first or original form of love in God and in all holy beings.

As the appropriate object of this form of love is existence in distinction from character, it will naturally direct itself, in an especial manner, towards those whom Providence has particularly associated with us, no matter what their characters may be. The mere fact of sentient existence, presented before us as an object of contemplation, will stir up the waters at the heart's fountain; but the relations of Providence will indicate the channels in which they must flow. Our relatives and others, with whom we are particularly associated in providence, may be very wicked. But the fact of their wickedness does not destroy the other and everlasting fact, that they are accountable existences; that they have immortal souls; that they are capable of great happiness or great misery. Fallen, degraded, miserable, they may be; but if we are like God, how can we help loving them? God is a fountain of love, flowing out continually towards all his creatures, sparing not even his own Son to save and bless them, and showing, more than in any other way, his love to those who are his enemies.

6. We may withhold from the wicked, esteem, respect, gratitude, honor; we may require of them penitence; we may be willing to see them suffer so far as justice requires them to suffer; but we should never withhold love. We never can withhold it without crime. And if we must love the wicked, who are placed before us in providence, certainly we must love the good. But in neither case are we allowed to love, as to persons or degree,

otherwise than God directs. The limitation of our capacity and position implies, although the *tendency* of the love of benevolence is to love all alike, that we cannot love all alike in fact. And a proper sense of that limitation will lead us to prefer that God should make the selection rather than that we should make it ourselves. Providence, to those who have perfect faith, is an infallible guide.

7. Look, then, constantly to God, here as elsewhere. Recognizing the great fact, that thou hast no fountain in thyself, let thy heart be fed from God's heart. The same in source, let thy love be the same in character; a love that loves without looking for reward. And then, placed entirely under God's direction, let the stream of love flow out and flow on. Under such conditions, it is certain, that God's and man's affections cannot be discordant. And it is in such a state of things that God and man may be said *to be united in love.*

CHAPTER VII.

OF THE MANIFESTATIONS OF LOVE IN THE FORM OF SYMPATHY.

Explanations of the term. — Illustrations of the subject. — Sympathy in connection with the business of the world. — Sympathy with beginners in religion. — Holy sympathy discriminating.—Power of this principle.

It is especially characteristic of the man who is united with God in love, that he is sympathetic. The term SYMPATHY, which, in its origin, is derived from the Greek language, expresses literally and strictly, *harmony, or union of feeling*. There must, therefore, be two or more persons, who are the subjects of this united or common feeling. There must, also, be some common object, in reference to which this united feeling is exercised. Accordingly, the sympathetic man is one who harmonizes in feeling, on the appropriate occasions of sympathy, with the feelings and situation of those around him.

2. The basis of sympathy is *love*. Love is the essence, of which sympathy is one of the modifications or forms. It is the nature of pure or holy love, not only to seek the good of others, but, harmonizing with the peculiarities of their situation, to rejoice in their joys, and to grieve in their sorrows. If we truly love others, it will be a necessary result that we shall take an interest in

everything which concerns them. Love, taking this form, is sympathy.

3. We will endeavor to give some illustrations of this interesting state of mind. A truly pious person, one in whom the principle of holy love predominates, is a member of a family. It does not make any difference, in relation to the subject under consideration, whether he is a member by the ties of relationship, or a member by mere residence. One of the members of the family is severely afflicted with sickness. The occurrence of this affliction furnishes the occasion on which the principle of holy love, moved by its own law of action, assumes the form of sympathy. The person who is the resident of the family, being such as we have described him to be, cannot witness such an affliction without "weeping with him who weeps." His sympathy, in the existing state of his mind, is a sort of necessity to him. It is possible that it may not present the same aspect with the sympathy of unsanctified nature, which is often agitated by fear, and perverted by selfishness. But, always necessary and certain in its existence, it will be of that tender, judicious, and permanent character, which will be the most useful, besides being the most heavenly.

4. We will suppose, again, not that the persons around us are sick, but that they have been deprived of the means of knowledge, and are exceedingly ignorant. They are excluded from science and literature, even in their simplest forms. The Bible, with its precious consolations, is a sealed book to them. It is impossible that they should experience such deprivations without being afflicted; and it is impossible that holy persons, filled with the love of God and man, should be acquainted with their situation, without sympathy. That is to say, under the impulse of love, they suffer with those afflicted

ones at the same time that they desire to relieve their sufferings; the term sympathy, expressing, in this case, the combined feeling of sorrow for their want, and of benevolent desire for its alleviation.

5. The principle of sympathy, as it exists in a holy mind, is not limited in its exercise to occasions furnished by men's physical sufferings, or by their spiritual wants. In things which are not directly of a religious character, but have certain prudential relations and issues, and are thought, by the men of the world, to be important to them, we are at liberty to harmonize in feeling and action, so far as can be done consistently with the claims of religion. This results, in part, from the peculiarities of our position. While a renovated heart, on the one hand, allies us with angels, a weak and dying body, on the other, allies us with the toils and wants of humanity. And we still have a bond of union in many things connected with our position, however different we may be in character. So that there may be occasions on which the most devoted Christian may as truly sympathize with his neighbors in building a bridge or a road, in establishing manufactories, in perfecting useful inventions, or in some other work connected with the ordinary wants of men, as in building a church. It is a mistake to suppose that religion dissociates us from humanity in anything which is lawful.

6. The principle of holy sympathy is very important, considered as constituting a medium of communication and a bond of union between hearts which have experienced the highest degrees of love, and those which are only partly sanctified. In a holy heart, to a considerable extent at least, faith takes the place of desire; and consequently, as a general thing, praise will predominate over supplication. A holy heart is a heart *jubilant;*

a heart "always rejoicing." But when the holy person comes into the company of those who are in a lower degree of experience, — who have much darkness mingled with their light, and much sorrow mingled with their joy, — the principle of holy sympathy alters his position, and leads him to unite his supplications with theirs. He goes down from "the mount of transfiguration" into the deep and dark valley; and, under the impulse of love, which is now changed into sympathy, he seeks, with wrestling and tears, to deliver his brethren.

7. Holy sympathy, in distinction from mere natural sympathy, is *discriminating*. That is to say, it is restricted and modified, so far as it relates to man, by the operation of the still higher form of the same principle, which may be described as *sympathy with God*. Holy sympathy, in being the offspring of holy love, is not like that weak sympathy generated from the natural heart, which modifies kindness by selfishness, and seeks a momentary relief of the sufferer rather than the ultimate and greatest good. Having its origin in the Divine Nature, it is always, in its operations and results, subjected to the providence and will of God. And, accordingly, it sometimes exists where it does not find itself at liberty to relieve the suffering for which it feels. It is not in the nature of holy sympathy, however intense it may be, to do anything which is wrong. And, accordingly, the person whose heart harmonizes with God, never undertakes to relieve that suffering which God, in his providence, evidently imposes for the good of him who is afflicted. His sympathy with God's ultimate designs regulates the tendencies of his sympathy for the sufferer.

8. And thus regulated, the principle of sympathy,

springing as it does from holy love, is one of the most important and effective elements of a holy life. It links the divine with the human, the upright with the fallen, the angel with the man. It has been the moving impulse, the life, of good men in all ages of the world. It detached Moses from the court of Egypt, that it might unite him with the sufferers of the desert; it poured its energies into the heart of Paul, and carried him from nation to nation; in modern times, it has carried devoted missionaries into all parts of the world; it moves the hearts of angels, of whom it is said, "there is joy among the angels in heaven over one sinner that repenteth." It achieved its mightiest triumph when the Saviour of the world, clothing himself in human form, chose to be smitten and die upon the cross rather than separate himself from the interests of fallen humanity.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON THE RELIGION OF LOVE AS COMPARED WITH THE RELIGION OF OBLIGATION.

Two principles of action. — Illustrations of these principles. — Relations of love and obligation. — The holy man acts from the principle of love. — He is approved by conscience without feeling the compulsions of conscience.

The view which has been given of love, as the great central element in religious experience, would be imperfect without presenting the matter in one other aspect, namely, the religion of love as compared with the religion of *obligation*.

There are two important principles in the human constitution, which are very different from each other in their nature; but which, operating in different ways, often harmonize in the production of the same results. The one is the great principle of love, which we have been endeavoring to illustrate; the other is the feeling of moral obligation. Cases of human conduct, illustrative of the operation of these two principles, are very frequent.

A man, for instance, visits and relieves one who is sick. The action, which is so interesting and important, may be ascribed either to the principle of love, or the sentiment of duty. The father of a family restrains those under his care from outward labors on the Sabbath day, and visits the house of God with them; and, in

doing so, he may be moved by love to God, or merely by the constraint of mental conviction and obligation. A child may render obedience to his parents from either of these motives; either because he loves to obey, — it being a pleasure, a delight to him to obey, — or because, without love, and sometimes against love, he feels it to be his duty to obey. And thus of many other instances.

2. It is important to ascertain the true position and the comparative relations of these principles. In the order of nature, love is the first in time. The heart naturally operates before the conscience. One evidence of this is, that it is the office of the conscience to intimate the proper regulations, and to establish the law of the heart. It is obvious, however, that there can be no regulation without something which is regulated; and conscience, whose business it is to regulate and direct, would obviously be a faculty without application and without use, if there were not propensities and affections which in the order of nature operated antecedently. Love is the true impulsive principle, the central movement or life of man, as it is of God and of all holy beings. Of conscience, it can only be said that it is its guard, the flaming sword which waves and flashes round it to protect its purity. And he who does not act in the right way naturally, and by the power of his own loving life, must be wounded and goaded into the right by the authority and the penalties of the moral sense.

3. Does the truly holy man, the man who has his life in God, act from love or from conscience? The statements which have already been made, indicate the answer. The holy man acts from holy love, — that is to say, from such love as conscience approves. The holy man does not act from mere will, against the desires of

his sensitive or affectional nature, on the ground, and for the reason, that his conscience requires him to do so; but, on the contrary, acts under the impulse of holy and loving affections, — affections which are the regenerated gift of God, and which sweetly carry the will with it. He acts, not so much *from* conscience, as *with* conscience. He acts from that, in himself, which makes him a partaker of the divine nature, namely, holy love, with conscience standing by, as it were, with its approbation and encouragement.

4. And this leads us to the explanation of one of the peculiarities of the higher states of religious experience. It is this. The more holy a man is, the less he feels of the compulsive power of conscience. When the heart, or rather the principle of love in the heart, (the *love-nature*, if we may so express it,) is adequate to the object of effecting or carrying out good purposes, conscience is not known or felt in the matter, except in that sweet, approving calm of the spirit, which is the result of inward adjustment and harmony. This is so much the case, that sometimes persons, who have been fully reëndowed by the Holy Ghost with a new love-nature, have almost had a fear that they had lost their conscience. But it should be remembered that conscience has two forms or modes of action; that which constrains or compels to do right, and that which approves when right is done. And while it is true that holy persons are not constrained or compelled by conscience, acting as they obviously do, by the impulses of a holy life or nature, without compulsion, it is equally true that they are approved by conscience. The holy joy within them, the calm, triumphant peace which they experience, the peace of God, the peace of angels, are both the evidence and the result of this approval.

5. It is a saying of St. Augustine — "Love, and do what you please." In acting from the impulse of love, we are conscious of the highest freedom. But pure love, or right love, (that to which St. Augustine refers,) is, by the very terms used, a love which is conformed to law. It is a love which is pure from selfishness, a love which is *right;* a love which does not, and cannot, while it remains pure, vary from the law of moral rectitude. He, who acts from such love, while he is conscious of the highest freedom, is safe in doing what he pleases, not only because his pleasure consists in benevolent feeling and action, but because his pleasure is always conformed to what is right. He is under law without feeling its pressure; because the pressure of law, or that which makes it felt as a compulsive and constraining power, never is and never can be felt, while the subject of it entirely harmonizes in feeling as well as in action with its requisitions. The man who, in perfect health, breathes the pure air of heaven, breathes *freely;* — but he does it in subjection to the laws of respiration, and yet without feeling any constraint, and perhaps without knowing that there are such laws. The man who walks the earth, in the perfect exercise of his muscles, is conscious of freedom, and of acting his own pleasure, while, at the same time, every movement is in subjection to the law of gravitation, and cannot be made without it. Indeed, it is the physical law in these cases, harmonizing with the purpose of the personal volition, which sustains both breathing and movement. And so it is the eternal law of right, indicating the channels in which it should flow, but without using compulsion, when compulsion is not needed, which sustains pure or holy love in a state of purity.

6. Angels have a conscience. They do always what

is right, and never otherwise than what is right. But they do not do it under the compulsions of conscience, but from the excellent and just impulses of a purified and loving nature. Conscience is a law to them, as it is a law to all other holy beings. But law, we are told, "is made for the lawless." (1 Tim. 1 : 9.) Those who are not lawless, but whose hearts and actions, of their own accord, harmonize with the law, are under the law without feeling the pressure of the law; rendering obedience to the law, almost without knowing what the law is. If they should attempt or desire to disobey, they would at once have knowledge as distinct as it would be painful. In other words, the operations of the conscience are anticipated and lost, as it were, in the antecedent operations of holy love. And these statements, which apply to angels and other unfallen beings, will apply essentially to men.

CHAPTER IX.

RECAPITULATION OF SOME OF THE PRINCIPLES WHICH HAVE BEEN EXPLAINED IN THE SECOND, THIRD, AND FOURTH PARTS.

I.

FAITH, considered as an element of the Divine mind, is a *nature*, and not an acquisition. In man, also, faith is a nature. But in God it is nature eternal; in man, it is nature *given*.

II.

God, without faith in himself, could not be God. And man, without faith in God as his Father, could not be the child of God. When man, therefore, was originally created, he was created with faith in God.

III.

Faith is the antecedent of knowledge. We cannot have knowledge, without having and using the instruments of knowledge. The instruments of knowledge, consisting in the various powers of perception and judgment which we possess, are God's workmanship; and we cannot have faith in the instruments, without having faith in the author of them. And this is a truth of philosophy, as well as of religion.

IV.

Knowledge, in the ordinary use of the word, has reference to those things which are distinctly within the

reach of the human mind; — the objects immediately around us, — the present realities of space and time. Faith, in the religious application of the term, has relation to those things which are beyond these limits. So that, as far as the human mind or any finite mind is concerned, the appropriate object of knowledge is the FINITE, while the appropriate object of faith is the infinite.

V.

God is directly the inspirer and author of faith; and indirectly, though not less really, the author of knowledge. That is to say, he not only gives and sustains the instruments of knowledge, but, acting in concurrence with that consent which is appropriate to a moral nature, he directs them. In both cases, God, and God only, is the great and true teacher.

VI.

If man was originally created in faith, he could not have fallen from his original state, except by ceasing to have faith; — in other words, by *unbelief*. And he cannot be restored to the state from which he fell, except by the restoration of faith. Provision for this restoration is made in Jesus Christ. And this restoration is actually realized in the case of all those, who, in ceasing to have faith in themselves, have opened the door of their hearts for the faith which is in God.

VII.

We cannot love God as our Father, without first believing in him as our Father. Faith, therefore, which stands first in order, may be regarded as the intellectual condition of sonship. Love, taking a more inward and central position, is the emotional, or, more strictly and better, the *affectional* condition of sonship. So that, if

faith stands first in the order of nature, love stands first in rank.

VIII.

Holy love, that love which loves without reward, which loves the evil as well as the good, and which "casts out fear," can exist ORIGINALLY only in an Infinite being. As it loves its enemies, it must be allied with a power which can cast out all fear of its enemies; and as it thus loves without any regard to the degree or strength of enmity, it can find an adequate support only in a power which is infinite. Holy love, therefore, considered in its source, is in natural and necessary alliance with infinite power. Its fountain-head is God.

IX.

And, on the other hand, God cannot exist as God without holy love as the central principle of his existence. It is obvious, that he must have some central and permanent principle of life; and if it be not love, it must be the opposite of love, which is impossible. Love, therefore, is the life of his infinity.

X.

As God, considered as a creator, is perfect in his creations, it is a *necessity* to him, (using the term in its moral and not its physical sense,) to create beings in the perfectness of his own image. Accordingly all moral beings are created, in the first instance, in the likeness of God's love.

The same may be said of love as of faith. In God or the Infinite Holy it is nature eternal; in the finite holy, (including in the expression all created holy beings,) it is nature *given*.

XI.

All holy beings, therefore, are constituted, in the first

instance, with a love-nature. And this benevolent and loving nature, which is accepted and sustained by their own choice, is derived and nurtured, like streams flowing from their parent lake, from the infinite love-nature. And all beings who have fallen from that original state, but who are fully regenerated again into the love-spirit, have not merely a new position, but a new life,— a fountain springing up within them forever, — in consequence of its birth or filiation from that true life of God which can never die.

XII.

And this life (as is always implied in the expressions pure or holy love when used in distinction from love without any such qualifying epithet) has a law in itself; so that it not only brings the subject of it into action by its power of movement, but its activity, without needing the compulsions flowing from the moral sense, is always approved by the moral sense; and harmonizes alike with truth and with rectitude.

XIII.

All beings, which, by being under the influence of holy love, may be said to be in the true life, necessarily live in harmony with each other, because they live from one central power; each being kept in his appropriate sphere by a principle of adjustment, which has its origin in God, but which reaches and regulates all the holy creatures of God.

XIV.

And this being the case, holy beings, in their respective spheres of existence, constitute holy communities or societies; being the subjects of a relationship which is sustained by its constitutive laws, and which is as beautiful as it is permanent; and while they are thus bound

to each other by the golden links of love, they are not less bound to God, who is their Father and their common source of life. And, accordingly, it is said in the Epistles of John, "Love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." And again, in another place, — "God is LOVE; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him."

OH LOVE! THOU DAY-STAR OF THE HEART!

Oh love! thou day-star of the heart!
Ascend upon thy throne!
Victor and lord, where'er thou art,
To all within the power impart,
Of life to God alone.

Such is the magic of thy sway
Upon the holy mind,
That sin, all powerless in thy ray,
Departs, as night-shades flee the day,
And leaves no cloud behind.

My soul was dark in other years;
The stain was on my brow;
And something whispers to my fears
The loss of all but sin and tears,
If thou shouldst leave me now.

But fears are gone, and tears are bright,
Lit with the beams of love:
There is no sin, nor grief, nor night,
To him whose inmost soul is light
With radiance from above.

PART FIFTH.

ON THE WILL OF GOD, AND THE UNION OF THE DIVINE AND HUMAN WILL.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE RELATION OF THE WILL OF GOD TO OTHER PARTS OF THE DIVINE NATURE.

Definition of the divine will. — On the necessity of an union of the human will with the divine. — A given act of the will embodies and represents all antecedent knowledge and affections. — In uniting with God's will, we unite with God in the full extent of his being.

In considering the wide and important subject of Divine Union, we proceed now to another series of topics, involving the relations of the human and divine will.

So far as we understand the state of union in any given case, we necessarily understand, at least in some important particulars, the nature of the objects which are united together. It is reasonable to suppose that, being a part of our own nature, we know what the human will is; and in this, as in many other things, we may reason from ourselves to our Maker. And, accordingly, the idea which men entertain of the will of God, considered as a separate attribute of the Divine Mind, is derived from that which they have of their

own wills. The will of God analogous to the will of man, but infinitely superior in its applications and extent, is that power in God which originates the divine volitions, purposes, or decisions.

2. Union with God implies and requires, not only union in knowledge and love, but union also, and perhaps still more emphatically, with the divine will. And the reason of this will be the more clearly seen in proportion as we more fully understand the relation of the will of God to the intellectual and affectional parts of the divine nature.

In God, in the same manner as in man, the will, or rather the act of the will, which consolidates and realizes the perceptions and affections in oneness of purpose and action, constitutes their true unity. It is true that God's knowledge may properly be regarded and contemplated as a whole; but extending to a multitude of distinct objects, it is equally true that it is fractional and in parts, so far as it exists in relation to particular cases. And besides, speaking after the manner of men, knowledge is to be compared with knowledge, and to be appropriately adjusted, in order that purpose and action may be based upon the highest or perfect knowledge. The divine affections also diversify and multiply themselves upon all the appropriate objects of affection; objects which are found everywhere, as far as knowledge itself extends. These affections are perfect in their sphere; but, being many in number, they do not represent, in particular cases, the wholeness or completeness of the divine nature. Affection is to be compared with affection in order to ascertain their comparative and just value. But the will, which never acts in a perfect being except on the comparison and adjustment of all

knowledge and all affection, centralizes and unites all in one.

3. So that the act of the will, in a perfect mind, may always be regarded as indicating and representing both the highest knowledge and the highest affection. It embraces all which can be comprehended under the head of knowledge and affection, and still without being divided in itself. Being perfect, the divine will or purpose can never be otherwise than it is; and being the final decision of the mind, and excluding all decisions and acts against itself, and standing alone in its supremacy, it is necessarily *one thing*. God can never will anything without centralizing, in regard to that particular thing, his whole nature; consolidating, in that one act, its multiplicities of thought and feeling into *unity*. So that God's purpose, developed in the precise time of his purpose, is the true representation or expression of God himself, existing at the same moment as perfect fulness or completeness embodied in perfect simplicity. And it is here that union with God is especially necessary.

4. If we consider the subject on the side of man, we see also the greatness of this necessity. Man's perceptive powers are limited. They do not correspond, in extent, with those of God; and consequently we can unite with God, in the matter of knowledge, only in a limited degree. The union with him, in this respect, may be perfect as far as it goes; but it is restricted in extent. And it will be found to be the same in relation to love. We may harmonize perfectly with the divine love, in all cases where objects of love are presented to us. But the sphere of our knowledge, through which objects are presented to us, being limited, the sphere of our love also is limited. Practically,

our love cannot, in its extent, be carried beyond the limit of known objects of love.

But, in the acts of the will, the Godhead, if we may be allowed the expression, so simplifies itself, that the harmony between the created and the uncreated, the human and the divine, may be perfect in extent as well as degree. God's will (we mean here, by the term, the *act* of his will in any given case) is a unity, combining together, as it were, and representing the whole of his knowledge, the whole of his love, the whole of his nature. As all objects may be, and are, present to it in a single glance, and compressed as it were into the eternal NOW, a single act of the will, embracing and adjusting all previous knowledge and all previous feeling, decides upon all, enacts all, establishes all. It is this act of the will,—an act extending to and consolidating everything else,—with which we are required to be united. Based upon infinite variety, in *itself* it is but one thing; and we are to unite with it as one. But as it is the unity of the Godhead, embracing the infinite variety of the Godhead, we cannot unite with God in the simplicity and unity of the will, without being virtually united with him in the infinite multiplicity of his knowledge and affection.

5. If these views are correct, which, in binding us to the will of God, bind us to the whole of God, we not only see how much is involved in an union with the divine will, but how fearfully hazardous it is to indulge in the slightest deviation from that will when it is once ascertained. No direction is more important than that which requires us to labor and pray for harmony with God in this respect. The other unions which have been mentioned, important and indispensable as they are, may be regarded as preparatory to this. The union of

the human and divine wills is the consummation of those which have gone before. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Saviour so frequently refers to this form of union. "My meat," he says, "is *to do the will of him that sent me.*"* And again he says, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." "He that doeth the will of God," says the apostle John, "abideth forever."†

* John 4 34; 6: 38. † First Epis. of John 2: 17.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE PERPETUAL IDENTITY OF THE DIVINE WILL.

God never discordant with himself, and hence his will always the same. — Views of philosophers on this subject not really, but only apparently, different from the views commonly taken. — Consolations of this doctrine.

THERE are some aspects of the subject now before us, which cannot be fully appreciated without keeping in mind the fact of the perpetual identity of the divine will.

God cannot be discordant with himself. That identity of nature, which is involved in the fact of his perfection, is only another name for unchangeable harmony. What now is, harmonizes with what has been; — and what shall be harmonizes with what now is. The end of God, therefore, if we may be allowed the expression, is identical with the beginning; and everything which is intermediate corresponds with the beginning and the end.

And this is as true of God's *will* as it is of any other part of his nature. What God thinks to-day he thought always, and what God feels to-day he felt always. He knew what was to be before it had a being. He rejoiced and had sorrow in its good and evil, before that good and evil had an existence. And it is the same of his will. What God wills to-day, he willed yesterday; what he

shall will a thousand years hence, he has already willed a thousand years ago.

2. It is a great truth, therefore,—a truth fundamental and essential in religion, that the operations or decisions of the divine will can never be otherwise than they are. The laws which originate them have their basis in the eternal mind, and are inflexible in their results. It is thus, for this reason and in this manner, that the divine will may be said to be perpetually identical. God cannot feel otherwise than he does, nor think otherwise than he does, nor will otherwise than he does And the reason is, because *he is God;* and, being God, he is not and cannot be anything less or otherwise than God.

If any other course of thought, feeling, willing, or action, were right and proper for him, it would be an obvious implication that his present course is not right, is not proper. Imperfection, which shows itself in taking a course less right and less proper than another course, would, in that case, be stamped upon it and upon the author of it. But it is hardly necessary to say that God and imperfection are ideas which are incompatible with each other.

3. It is true, that the statement of the absolute verity on this subject is not precisely the statement of the truth or verity, as it is developed to man's outward perception. The statement of the absolute truth is what philosophical writers sometimes denominate *supersensuous*, the statement of the thing *as it is;* the other statement is subordinate and accommodated to the senses, the statement of the thing as it *appears*. The one statement is the expression of the unchangeable and divine view; the other of the human. The one is total, the other fragmentary. Nevertheless, there is no incompatibility in them. They agree with each other, as the

parts, when properly adjusted, agree with the whole. The statement, accommodated to man's limited perception, would be simply this. Whatever God wills *now*, although the volition may not have taken effect till the present moment, he has virtually willed from *eternity*. The will, virtual or potential, that is to say, the will in its *capability* of action, the will "IN POSSE," as it is sometimes expressed,—although it may have existed millions of centuries before the circumstances, which at last surrounded it, developed it in the issues of specific action, — is the same, and must be the same, as the will in effective exercise, the will "IN ACTU." It had in itself from the beginning a law, which involved the result. In other words, it is the same thing under a different aspect; in the one case essential but undeveloped, in the other essential, but in exercise.

4. So that, in either case, whether we take the supersensuous view, or the view which is accommodated to the imperfect action of the senses, the same great and essential truth remains. In other words, the mind and the acts of God, including his will and his volitional acts, whether seen in their fragmentary form through the successions of time, or in the identicalness of that mode of vision which is above the senses and above time, are "*without variableness, and without shadow of turning*." Here, then, is an identity, not more sublime in its nature than its continuance, which runs parallel with eternity, and is sustained by the same principles which make and sustain God himself.

5. The perpetual identity, or, what is the same thing, the immutability, of God's will presents a strong contrast with the mutability of the creature's will. Man's will, (we speak now of the natural man, or the man out of God,) is changeable. By separating himself from God,

he took his will, which is hardly less than another name for himself, out of God's keeping, and placed it in his own. But man out of God neither knows, nor can know, what is true, nor what is good, nor what is right, except relatively and imperfectly. The absolute truth, as well as the absolute good and the absolute right, is beyond his reach. His views are not only limited, but perverted. As he has cut himself off from the source of truth, the truth is not in him, except imperfectly and pervertedly; and he is floating loosely amid a sea of errors, which flows out from the falsity of his own inward position. His will, therefore, unmoored as it is from the eternal foundations, is fixed to no object, except to himself; and as self, or the life of self, has no centre but in its own selfishness, it wanders about, attracted by every object which promises to feed its depraved appetite, and seeking a rest, which, in the rejection of the true rest, it is never destined to find.

6. Such is the changeableness of man's will in his unsanctified state. How different is all this from the true and unchangeable foundations of God; — and how different the condition of the unholy man, who rests upon himself, from that of the man who is united with the infinite! On the strong rock of the perpetual identity of the divine will, and not on the uncertain quicksands of a will which is liable to change, the holy man rests his head in peace. No storms terrify him. Knowing, as he does, that to God there is no past and no future, his soul, combining the past and the future into one, may be said to be centred in the eternal present. To Sense, indeed, many things are new. To Faith, nothing is new. To Sense, many things are strange, unprecedented, terrifying. There are storms, diseases, wars, the sky in commotion the earth heaving, nations destroyed. But

to Faith, whose eye penetrates beneath the surface, there is only what was designed to be; the development of a will, which, in being invariably true to mercy, wisdom, and justice, never changes from its own settled line of action, but is identical in its eternity. These present things, which occupy and perplex the senses, are the externalities which clothe the inward life. They may be described as the "veil of the temple," within which there is God *without an image*, unseen by that external eye which can see only the form of things, but visible to that eye of Faith, which, beneath all outward forms, sees, and knows, and loves the Eternal Essence.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE NATURAL AND MORAL SUPREMACY OF THE DIVINE WILL.

Explanations of the natural supremacy of the divine will. — Explanations of its moral supremacy. — Results of the views presented. — The law of right requires the union of the human with the divine will.

THERE is a natural supremacy of the divine will. There is a moral supremacy also. In natural things, it is supreme by nature. In moral things, it is supreme by right. The natural supremacy, which presents itself first for consideration, is fixed, and cannot be otherwise than it is. It is the supremacy which makes and originates; the infinite energy concentred in the one infinite purpose, overspreading all, consummating all. All things which exist, so far as the mere fact of being is concerned, have their existence, both in its origin and its continuance, in the natural supremacy of God's will. In that will, all trees and plants, and all other things which are produced on the earth's surface, have their life. In that will, the sun, and moon, and stars live; and all things and beings that inhabit them. In that will, all men, and all animals inferior to men, in all their varieties, have their origin and their continued support. It is a will *supreme*, because everything else is a dependency.

This, it will be noticed, is said in connection with the *physical* nature of things. Over all things in their physical nature, there is what may be called a natural or

physical supremacy of the divine will, which transcends everything because it is the source of everything.

2. There is also a *moral* supremacy of the divine will. God, in the exercise of the natural supremacy of his will, and acting under the direction of his moral nature, created beings like himself, beings having a moral nature. In doing this, he gave them the power to do as they pleased; that is to say, to take any course which they might choose to take within the sphere of their natural or physical capability. But in giving them the power thus to act, which was essential to them as moral beings, he did not give them the *right*. He could not do it. As a being possessed of all power, he could give them the power to do what they pleased; but, as a being possessed of all holiness, he could give them the right to do only what *was* right, and nothing else. Further than this, they never had any right, nor ever can have.

3. And the consequence is, that all moral beings, whether men or angels, as they have a right to do only what *is* right, have no right to dislocate and remove themselves from under the divine will. The liberty they have of doing as they please undoubtedly gives them the power or enables them to do it; but the law of right, which prescribes in what manner their capability is to be exercised, forbids it. If it is not right for them to remove from under God's will, then it is their duty to remain under it. As moral beings, they cannot do otherwise without a violation of morals. God's will is supreme over them physically or naturally, because their natural or physical life is wholly dependent upon it. It is supreme over them morally, because they cannot abdicate its supremacy without doing a wrong. The supremacy is secured in the one case by a physical necessity; in the other, by a moral necessity. The

physical law subjects them to God as physical men; the moral law subjects them to God as moral men.

4. Accordingly, if we carry these principles into particulars, we shall find that, in no case whatever, can we separate ourselves from God *rightly*. In union alone, that union which is appropriate to the relation of superior and inferior, is there true life. And here, living, not by what we have originally, but by what is momentarily given us, if we need strength, the law of morals requires us to look for it where we can best obtain it. If we need wisdom, we cannot, without a violation of duty, seek it where it is not to be had, but must go to him, who alone has true wisdom. If we need love, which, more than anything else, is the true inspiration of the soul, we must go to him, who, in being himself LOVE, can supply us from the original fountain. And so in every other case. If it be true, as the apostle James asserts, that "every good gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights," then we can have nothing good which does not come from him. And, as the law of duty requires us to seek good in preference to evil, and as we can find the true good in God alone, it is not possible for us, in doing what we ought to do, to take any other position than that of humble recipients. And in that position, bound to submit to a higher guidance if that guidance will be best for us, God's will becomes morally supreme over us, and we can neither be in the right nor the good, except so far as we are in harmony with that blessed will.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE UNION OF THE HUMAN AND DIVINE WILL.

Difference between union of the will and extinction of the will. — Evils of a separation of wills. — The will always acts. — Methods by which we determine the union of wills. — Of prayer and faith in connection with union of moral and affectional union. — True idea of the death of the will.

Union of the human will with the divine is a different thing from an extinction of the human will. A will, a proper and effective will, is essential to humanity. Man, without a will, ceases to be man. The perfection of man's nature does not consist in the extinction of his will, but in its union with God's will.

2. The truly holy person, therefore, ought to be able to say specifically, at all times, *that he wills as God wills.* It is due both to his happiness and his safety to be able to know, and on proper occasions to assert, the union of the two wills. If there is a separation of wills, even if it be a slight one, there will be likely to be something out of position somewhere else. A separation of wills is a separation of natures. As the will is, so is the man, either *for* God or *against* him. It is as true in philosophy as religion, that it is impossible to serve God and Mammon at the same time.

3. It may be asked, perhaps, what view are we to take of ourselves *when we do not will at all?* The answer to such a question is not difficult, because we can hardly ever be said to be in that state. Our whole life,

with the exception of purely involuntary states, may be represented by two terms, action and inaction. Neither of these states can exist without volition as its basis. If we act, we *will* to act; if we are in a state of inaction, we *will* not to act. Whatever state we are in as moral agents, and not as mere involuntary agents, whether it be characterized as action or inaction, we *will* to be in it. So that we may, without impropriety, speak of the action of the will as perpetual. Perpetual action implies the obligation of perpetual harmony.

4. In order to determine whether our wills are in harmony with the divine will, it is not necessary nor best, as a general thing, to look at the will itself, and to examine its action as it comes under our notice independently of the influences which surround it. When certain conditions are fulfilled, certain results may be expected to follow.

And, accordingly, we may anticipate that our wills will be in harmony with the divine will when we are in the habit of asking God for a divine direction of our wills. There can be no union with God without prayer. We do not mean to say that the prayer, which, if it be a true prayer, always implies a state of sincere and entire consecration, must always be *formal;* but there must always be an inward disposition, which constantly recognizes the soul's dependence upon God, and which as constantly looks for his aid. To such a soul, if it has faith corresponding to its desires, God will not fail to grant his assistance. When we feel that we have strength from God, by feeling that we have an accepted communion with him, then we may have hope that we shall and do will only what God wills.

5. But, in order to understand the subject fully, it

should be added, that there are two forms of union of the will; — namely, moral union, and affectional union. It is the combination of the two, uniting the outward act, or the thing done, with the motive of doing it, which constitutes perfect or holy union.

Moral union of the will exists when the will is united with God by means of moral enforcement merely, that is to say, under the constraints of moral obligation, without the consenting and affectionate concurrence of the heart. Such an union, which can exist only in respect to outward acts, makes what the world calls a moral man, but not a religious one. When a man does what God commands, — in other words, does what is right in *action*, but does it in opposition to his own selfish desires, — he is in union with God, if we may so express it, *morally*, or in the outward manner, but not *affectionally*, or in the inward disposition. He is a man *divided; partly* for God, and partly *against* him. His conscience is right, but his heart is wrong. In the language of the apostle Paul, he does that which he hates to do; he does good, but "evil is present with him."

Some would, perhaps, say, that a union so imperfect as this, including only a part of our nature, is not to be regarded as union in any proper sense of the term. But looking at the subject psychologically, that is to say, in reference to the nature of the mind, it is obviously a positive or real union as far as it goes. Undoubtedly it is imperfect. It has not that full and broad basis which it might have, and which it ought to have. But still it is something, and especially because it involves that *conviction* of mind which is likely to lead to something else better. He who observes the Sabbath, not because he loves to observe it, but because his conscience requires it, is in a more favorable condition than he who has

neither conscience nor love. But if something is done, it is still certain that the most important part remains to be done.

6. The union of the will, which has just been described, becomes consolidated and perfect when we add the concurrence of the affections to the supports of the moral sense. It is this union which we have denominated *affectional.* In order, therefore, to that union of the will with God which is requisite in the highest state of religious experience, the action of the will, in harmonizing with God's will, must rest upon the twofold basis of the *approbation of the conscience* and of the *love of the heart.* In any other state of the mind, the union of the will with God is more or less obstructed and enfeebled. When, in connection with the moral union, the obstruction of all discordant tendencies and desires is out of the way, and the affections are in the right direction, the union is such as it should be. Of a will thus united with God, it may be said, with almost literal truth, that it is the subject of a new creation, and has a new life.

7. But then comes up the great question again, How can we obtain this basis of love? How can we be made to possess that which we are not possessed of, by being made to love that which we do not love? Especially as love, in that higher sense of the term which has been explained, is not human, but divine; not a thing created, but eternal. The answer is, that God, in being a benevolent existence, necessarily loves to dispense his own nature, to enter into all hearts where there is a possibility of entrance, to pour out everywhere the radiance of his own brightness. What we have to do, then, is first to be emptied, in order that we may be filled; first to

cease from self, that we may be recipients of that which is not self.

But how can we do this? Or how can we learn to do it? Daily, O man, is the Providence of God teaching thee, by perplexing human wisdom, by disappointing human efforts, and by showing, in a thousand ways, the blindness, the weakness, and the iniquity of selfishness. It is for this that thou art smitten. Sorrow is thy teacher. It is a hard lesson to learn, but still a necessary one, that a life out of the divine life is not life, but that the true life is from God. Our heavenly Father, in the infinite fulness of his nature, will pour out upon us the principle of holy love, as soon as we are ready to relinquish the opposing principle of self.

8. In connection with what has now been said, we shall be able to form a true idea of what is sometimes denominated the *death* of the will.

Properly speaking, or perhaps we should rather say, in this case, *psychologically* speaking, man's will can never die. A will is essential to man's nature, as it is to the nature of every moral being. We repeat, man without a will, ceases to be man.

When, therefore, in examining the topics connected with religious experience, we speak of the death of the human will, we mean the human will considered in its action and its tendency to action, *out of the divine order*. It is the human will *divergent*, — resting in the origin of its movement on the limited and depraved basis of *personal interest*, and out of harmony with the will of God.

9. In the sense which has just been given, the human will, before it can have a higher and divine life, not only *may* die, but *must* die. Its death is not only possible but

necessary. In its present life, if we may so express it, it has its principle of movement in motives which God cannot respect and approve; but, on the contrary, he disapproves and condemns them as inconsistent with the highest good of the universe. From such a will he is necessarily excluded.

It is impossible, therefore, that there should be any mitigation of its sentence; any pity or compromise whatever with its natural life. The hand of God himself, through the working of his unerring providences, nails it to the cross. It may exhibit much resistance; it may experience a painful and lingering death; with the nails driven through its hands and feet, it may plead that its bones may not be broken, and that its side may not be pierced; but no attention can, or ought to be given to its supplications.

10. The death of the will (that is to say, its death to the selfishness of nature) is the antecedent of its resurrection to holiness. In its resurrection love takes the place of selfishness. The will can no more be born into its new and divine life, and expand and flourish in its new beauty and maturity of love, before the extinction and death of its natural life of selfishness, than the spiritual body of the resurrection, adorned with immortal beauty, can come into existence before the death of the natural body. "That which thou sowest," says the apostle Paul, speaking of wheat and other grains, "is not quickened *except it die.*" "So also," he adds, "is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body."

And these expressions, applied to the resurrection of the body, are applicable to the death and resurrection

of the will. If it dies to all that is the opposite of God, it is made alive to all that has God in it. Dishonored and corrupted in its selfish nature, it perishes and is thrown lifeless into its burial place, until the spirit of God, brooding over and operating in its ruins, brings life out of death, and glory out of shame.

CHAPTER V.

ON THE DIFFERENT DEGREES OF UNION WITH THE WILL OF GOD.

Union of submission. — Illustrations. — Union accompanied with joy. — A third and higher form of union. — Instances.

There are different degrees of union with the Divine Will, some of which it may be proper to notice and discriminate.

The first degree may be described as union with the divine will *in submission*. Submission is a relative term, and always implies, when employed in a religious sense, a reference to a divine arrangement or order of things. It is acquiescence in, or conformity to, such arrangement; and is, consequently, the opposite of rebellion. Accordingly, it may always be said, when there is no element of positive resistance, no actual rebellious movement against the order of things, that there is submission to it. And this can be said without impropriety and with entire truth, even if it should be the case that the submissive state borders so closely on the line of resistance as to require all our powers of thought and of the will to keep it where it is.

2. Illustrations of this state of mind are very frequent Occasion is furnished for them by events which are constantly taking place, — such as the loss of property and reputation, and the experience of physical sufferings, either by ourselves, or by those who are dear to us. If

those, who are the subjects of these trials, are truly submissive, their minds are brought by divine grace into such a position, that there is actually no resistance, no rebellious movement, of the heart. And this is so much the case, that we can probably say of them, that their wills are in union with the divine will.

And still their own consciousness tells them, even if it is not obvious to the observation of others, that it is the union of simple acquiescence rather than of positive desire; the union of submission to suffering rather than of love to suffering. The fact of obedience, however sincere and true the obedience itself may be, does not prevent their saying with equal truth, that it is hard for nature to yield it. The tears flow, even when the heart does not murmur. There is submission *in fact*, but a submission which costs a struggle in the beginning, and watchfulness and struggles in the maintenance of it.

3. The second degree may be described as union with the divine will *with choice*. That is to say, we not only submit, but submission is our pleasure, our delight. The endurance of loss and suffering is not, and cannot ordinarily be, so great as to prevent a true and substantial joy of the heart. It is said of the early Christians, not merely that they submitted to suffering with patience, but that they *rejoiced* that they were accounted worthy to suffer for the name of Jesus.* It ought, perhaps, to be added, that persons in this state are not insensible to sufferings. On the contrary, they feel them; probably as much so as others. But while they submit to them by enduring them with entire patience, they also, in the exercise of a full and victorious faith, rejoice

* Luke 5: 41.

in them as expressions of the divine will. They have learned to love the cross, as well as to bear it.

4. This last state of mind may assume a new character, and may present the union of the will in a new aspect, by becoming invigorated and perfected *by habit.* It may ultimately become so well established and strong that the effect of antecedent evil habits, which generally remains for a long time, and greatly perplexes the full sway of holiness in the heart, shall be done away entirely. And this is not all. In the course of time, our perceptions of the transcendent beauty and excellence of the will of God may become so increased in clearness and strength, that the pleasure of doing and suffering his will, increased in the same proportion, may entirely absorb and take away our sense of suffering. The suffering will be lost in the joy. "Death," a name which includes all temporal evil, "will be swallowed up in victory."

5. It was thus, in the experience of this higher degree of volitional union, that Paul and Silas sung songs in prison. It was thus that martyrs of every age have illustrated the stake and the cross with their triumphs. It was thus that Jesus Christ, though a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, "endured the cross, despised the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God." Heb. 22 : 2.

CHAPTER VI.

ON TRAINING THE WILL TO HABITS OF SUBJECTION.

Necessity of personal effort. — We should yield our wills to others in matters indifferent. — Extract from Antonia Bourignon. Remarks on the directions given by the Saviour. — On submission to natural events.

The closing remarks of the last chapter naturally lead us to a subject of no small practical importance, that of training the will to habits of subjection. It is not only necessary that our feelings and purposes should, by divine aid, be brought back to a right position, but that the mysterious and powerful influence of former evil habits should be entirely annulled. And this result is the more likely to be secured, if we unite the concurrence of our own efforts with the operations of divine grace.

2. A favorable effect will oftentimes be experienced in this particular, if we adopt the practice, in things which are indifferent, of subjecting our desires and our will to the will of others. In other words, our wills will be the more easily placed beyond the influence of former evil habits, and brought into undisturbed harmony with God, if we keep them in subjection in our intercourse with men. Occasions of a conflict of will, in matters of mere convenience, and which involve no moral principle, occur constantly. In such cases, in the prospect we have before us of an improvement in our spiritual characters, we should make it a rule to give a

precedence to the desires and purposes of others over our own.

"There is nothing more sweet," says Antonia Bourignon, in speaking on this subject, "and which brings more rest to the body and the soul, than obedience and submission to another in good things. Yea, obedience in itself is always profitable to our perfection, though it were yielded even to imperfect persons, *provided they command nothing that is evil.* For, by submitting to another in indifferent things, one always overcomes the corruptions of his nature, and *denies himself*, as Christ, in Mark 8 : 34, has taught us to do." *

3. This reference to the instructions of the Saviour leads us to remark, that his directions will be found, on a careful examination, to harmonize in a wonderful manner with the tendencies and operations of the human mind. Under their wonderful simplicity, great insight and true wisdom, (estimating them even on human principles,) will be discovered to be hidden. "Whosoever," the Saviour says in the passage just referred to, "will come after me, *let him deny himself*, and take up the cross, and follow me." This command, which of course applies to the will as well as other things, is universal. It implies, if we must deny ourselves in great things, we must deny ourselves also in those which are small. Such are the laws of the human mind, that indulgence in the latter will take away our strength, and deprive us of victory in the former. Deny thyself, therefore, in small things; subject thy will, in matters of minor importance, that thou mayest have power to conquer in things which are more difficult.

4. We should deny ourselves, and bring our wills into

* Letters of Antonia Bourignon, pp. 72, 73.

subjection, even in *good things*. It is naturally expected of the Christian, that he will have in hand many little designs and purposes of good in behalf of his neighbor. This is well, but evil will come of it, if, in connection with his good designs, he indulge in strong and precipitate desires in bringing them to pass. His will, by being brought into harmony with Providence, must be subjected here as elsewhere.

And here we take occasion to mention a case a little different from those hitherto referred to, where some of these remarks will apply well. It is often the case, in the ordinary intercourse and affairs of life, that our actions, without being calumniated as criminal, are more or less misrepresented, and our motives aspersed by thoughtless or evil-disposed persons. Undoubtedly the natural tendency of the heart, under such circumstances, is to reply at once, and generally with as much energy as promptness. But, generally speaking, our true victory will be in *silence*. Nature speaks, but grace is silent; because nature is destitute of confidence, except in itself, but grace has confidence in God. To be silent, therefore, in ordinary cases, is best in every respect; not only because it is the course indicated by true religion, but because it aids in breaking down the irregular and sinful action of the will.

5. And while we should thus, so far as can be done consistently with moral principle, subject our purposes to the wishes and purposes of others, we should also, and with the same general object, and certainly with no less reason, keep our wills in subjection to natural events. Such events are from God; and, in no case, should the human will set itself in opposition to them, whether they seem to be of greater or less consequence. How often are expressions of dissatisfaction and regret heard to fall

even from those who have the reputation of being Christians, in view of natural events, which no one thinks of controlling. To one, the weather is too warm; to another, it is too cold. To one, there is too little rain; to another, too little sunshine. They thus wickedly unsettle the quiet of the spirit by forgetting that both the rain and the sunshine and all other natural things are God's; that they are all indications of the divine goodness, though given in different degrees; and that neither regrets nor wishes can make them otherwise than they are. It is important to check the rising feeling in all such cases; and, by a cheerful acquiescence, to harmonize the heart and the will with the arrangements of Providence.

And these views are the more important and urgent when we consider that sin, here and elsewhere, is measured, not so much by the occasion on which it exists, as by the spirit which is manifested in it. It may utter itself in a loud and fierce voice, or gently breathe itself out in the slightest wish, that the state of things were otherwise than it is. But in the latter case, as well as in the former, there is the element of rebellion; something, no matter how small it may be, which is not in entire harmony with God and the divine arrangements. In a word, there is *sin*. But this is not all. It is sin laying the foundation for other and higher sin. On the other hand, a cheerful acquiescence, in such cases as have been mentioned, is not only right in itself, but, by purifying the tendencies of the will, is laying the foundation for a better state of things in other cases of greater difficulty in all coming time.

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE RELATION OF SUFFERING TO DIVINE UNION.

Of the connection between suffering and holiness. — The separation from objects of unholy desire necessarily involves suffering. — When separated from such objects, man is led to seek God. — Suffering to be regarded as a spiritual privilege. — Reasons for this view. — Dyonysius the Areopagite. — Explanation of the "divine darkness."

The way of those who truly and deeply believe, like that trodden by the divine Master in whom they have trusted, is a path of trial. "Whosoever," says the Saviour, "doth not bear his cross and come after me, *cannot* be my disciple."* The most eminent Christians have, as a general thing, been called to pass through the greatest sufferings. Infinite wisdom, which explains the means it uses by the results that follow, has seen fit to connect their sufferings with their sanctification. God has seen it to be necessary that they should suffer, not only for the good of others, which they could easily understand, but also for their own good, the reasons of which it was the more difficult to see. A few remarks will explain, in part, the nature of this necessity.

2. A heart *unsanctified*, which is the same thing as a heart not united with God, is a heart which has become disordered both in its faith and in its attachments. Its desires, in consequence of its faith being wrongly placed,

* Luke 14 : 27.

are separated from their true centre; and, consequently, are either given to wrong objects, or, by being inordinate, exist in a wrong degree. The sanctification of the heart is its restoration from this wrong state. And this is done by a course the reverse of that which sin has previously prompted it to take, namely, by the substitution of a right faith for a wrong one; by taking the desires from wrong objects, and by suppressing all their inordinate action. But this is a process which is not ordinarily gone through without much suffering.

3. The faith and desires of the man who is disunited from God, are necessarily placed upon himself, including in himself those things which he claims and rests in as *his own*. A man, for instance, has faith in his riches, in the lands he has purchased, and the houses he has built. His affections naturally follow in the channel of his faith; and he loves what he believes in. His possessions become his God. In what way can this bond of unholy union be sundered? It is by destroying, in whole or in part, the objects to which this wrong confidence and these wrong affections attach themselves. If the objects remain in their strength and beauty, and fulfil all the purposes which are expected of them, how is it possible to destroy confidence and attachment? "I spake unto thee," says God, "in thy *prosperity*, and thou saidst I will not hear."* And accordingly, he is compelled, as it were, to send his flood and fire, his pestilence and famine. Smitten and blasted in the work of his hands, man's faith in human toil and acquisition at last fails; and he exclaims, with the wise preacher of the Scriptures, "All is vanity and vexation of spirit." It is then, and not till then, that he is ready to hear and obey the voice of his Maker.

* Jerem. 21: 21.

4. Again, man has confidence in his reputation. With are and labor he has established a good name, which seems to him a tower of strength. His love corresponds to his faith; and he loves his honor, as he terms it, still more than his wealth. But since the fall of man, selfishness, instead of holy love, has become the basis of humanity; and envy, base, malignant, and insidious, always follows in the track of fame. God, who knows his idol, has allowed the destroyer to cast it down. Before he is aware of it, his good name, which had been secured by years of toil and care, which shone high and bright as the sunbeam, is prostrated in the dust. His tears show how great and bitter is his disappointment. From that hour, ceasing to place confidence in himself, he can say, what he never said before: "I called upon the Lord in distress. The Lord answered me, and set me in a large place. It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man."*

5. And it is thus in other things. Looking everywhere except to God, man is everywhere doomed to disappointment. And God, in the exercise of his mercy, means that he shall be. It is in mercy that the divine hand is heavily upon him. In his wealth, in his health, in his good name, in his worldly wisdom, in everything which separates him from God, the storms from heaven sweep away the sandy foundation on which his frail house is built. Ceasing, under such circumstances, to have faith in himself, and in anything which depends upon himself, he has nothing left him but hopelessness and despair. And it is in this necessity that he begins to think of the true source of help. Despair of himself leads him to seek God.

6. There is truth in the saying which is found in

* Ps. 118: 5, 8.

experimental writers, that the loss of ourselves is the possession of God. The sad experience in our state of sin, that faith in the created and the finite has no adequate foundation, leads us back, or rather is the occasion, through the grace of God, of our *being led back* to him, who is the only proper object of faith. When the vessel of our own making sinks, when the frail plank to which we had clung passes from under us, it is then, and not till then, that we seize the strong hand of him who walks upon the winds and waves. We sink that we may rise; we suffer that we may be healed again; we die that we may live.

7. In connection with what has been said, we may properly make the remark further, that suffering, considered as a nurse of holiness, may justly be regarded as a spiritual privilege. Certain it is, that the only true pleasure, the only true privilege, which heaven or earth affords, is that of doing and suffering the will of God. All pleasure which is separate from God, is only evil and wretchedness in disguise.

It is well for us to suffer, among other things, that we may have a better understanding of the situation of others who suffer, and may have more sympathy with them. A fallen world, where evil is continually striving with good, is not the garden where true and unalloyed happiness may be expected to grow. Suffering, whatever distinctions grace may make among men, places us on a level with the common lot of humanity, and leads us continually to think of the situation of sinners, and to feel for them.

Another of the benefits connected with the endurance of suffering, is, that, when endured in the fulness of Christ's dispositions, it imparts true liberty of spirit. It is hardly necessary to say, that there can be no bondage

to the mind that cheerfully lays all the world's gifts upon God's altar. It finds its riches in having nothing, and realizes the feeling of its freedom in the fact that it has no choice separate from God's choice.

8. Again, when suffering is attended with right affections, it becomes one of the strongest, and perhaps the only satisfactory evidence of true love. If God should bestow upon us mercies alone, without trials, it might be difficult to say, whether we loved him for himself, or only for the blessings he gave. But if our affection remains unshaken under the trials he sees fit to send, we have good reason to regard it as true. The love which exists and flourishes at such times is not a mere accessory, dependent for its continuance upon circumstances, but is a permanent principle.

One remark more remains to be added. The tendency of suffering is not only to lead us to God, as the only being who can help us, but to keep us there. The general result, in the case of Christians, is, the more they suffer, the more they trust; and the more they trust, the more will the principle of trust or faith be strengthened. So that affliction, by impressing the necessity of higher aid than human, tends not only to originate faith in God, but indirectly to increase it; tends not only to unite us with God, but to strengthen that union.

Indeed, it is difficult to see how faith can be much strengthened in any other way. When we walk by faith, we walk, in a certain sense, in darkness. If it were perfectly light around us, we should not walk by faith, but by open vision. Faith is a light to the soul; but it is the very condition of its existence, that it shall have a dark place to shine in. It is faith which conducts us, but our journey is through shadows. And this illustrates the meaning of certain expressions fre-

quently found in the experimental writings of Dionysius the Areopagite, and found also in other writers who hold similar views, such as the "*night of faith*," "*the divine darkness*," "*the obscure night of faith*," and the like.

It is hardly necessary to say, that darkness or night, in its application to the mind, is a figurative expression, and means trial or suffering, attended with ignorance of the issues and objects of that suffering. And, accordingly, these writers teach, in harmony with other experimental writers, that seasons of trial, leading to the exercise of faith, are exceedingly profitable. The biblical writers, whom they profess to follow, obviously teach the same. "Persecuted," says the apostle, "but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed. Always bearing about in the body *the dying of the Lord* Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body." And again, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." 2 Cor. 4: 9, 10, 17.

CHAPTER VIII.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE RELATION BETWEEN MAN AND GOD BY THE RELATIVE POSITION OF PARENT AND CHILD.

Christ's interest in little children. — Passages of Scripture. — General proposition deduced from them. — This proposition considered in particulars, namely, in faith, in knowledge, in love, and the will. — The existence of a filial nature not inconsistent with moral responsibility. — Remarks.

One of the striking incidents in the history of our Saviour is the notice which he takes of little children. "And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them; and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God." Mark 10: 13, 14. And again it is said in Matthew,* "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

2 Taking all the various passages which may be found on this subject, we may properly deduce from them the following general proposition, namely: It is necessary to possess and to exhibit towards our heavenly Father such dispositions, both in kind and degree, as

* Matthew 18: 3.

exist in the minds of children towards their earthly parents.

The analogy between the two cases is very striking; and it was the clear perception of its closeness, and of the beautiful and important instruction involved in it, which seems to have so much interested the Saviour's mind. As he looked upon little children, he perceived that they felt towards their earthly fathers very much as he felt towards his own Father in heaven; and, with such a striking illustration before him of what he experienced in his own bosom, he could not fail to be interested. And this striking resemblance between the feelings of the child of man and the feelings of the child of God, as the former are directed towards the earthly parent and the latter towards the heavenly parent, will throw light upon and will help to confirm some of the leading principles in the relations of God and man, which have hitherto been laid down.

3. The general view, then, upon which we proceed in the remarks that follow, is this: — The earthly child, in its relations to its earthly father, is the representation, the earthly development, if we may so express it, of the relations of the child of God to his Father in heaven.

And this is seen, in the first place, in the matter of FAITH. It is very obvious, in regard to the faith which the earthly child has in its earthly parent, that it is a faith given, a faith *implanted*. The filial confidence which it exhibits is not something which the child makes himself; nor is it, as some seem to suppose, the result of experience; but is innate. God himself is the giver of it. Implanted by the divine hand, and operating instinctively, the faith of the child is seen in the earliest movements of its infancy. And ever afterwards, in the various situations in which the child is placed, it

retains all the attributes and exhibits all the results of an implanted or connatural principle; so much so, that, to withhold confidence from a father or mother, we all feel to be doing that which is a violation of nature.

4. And such precisely was the character of the faith which man possessed in his heavenly Father before he fell. The views which have already been presented in the chapters on the union of God and man in faith, are sustained by the beautiful analogy which is here presented to our notice. The first man was created in the possession of faith. We have endeavored to show, in a former chapter, that he could not have been created in any other way. To believe in God was a *nature* to him; just as we find, at the present time, that it is natural for the child to place confidence in its earthly parent. And in the full restoration of man to God, (a restoration for which provision is made in the coming and atonement of Christ, and in the renewing agency of the Holy Spirit,) the principle of faith will be reëstablished, not merely as a variable exercise of the mind originating in the will, but as a permanent element or nature of the mind existing in harmony with the will, and with the will's consent. And those who are thus restored will become, in respect to their faith, "little children."

5. Again, it is natural to the child to look up to the father, and to be guided by him in matters of KNOWLEDGE. It is an established principle, in the philosophy of the human mind, that knowledge is and must be preceded by faith. The relations of the two we have already explained in part in former chapters. It is impossible for us, in the very nature of things, to accept as our teacher a being in whom we have no confidence. Faith, extending to all things which are its appropriate objects, is first

given to the child as an inherent and essential part of his nature. Then, under the influence of that filial confidence which leads him to look to his parents for everything else, it is natural to him (and it would be against nature to do otherwise) to look for and to receive his intellectual guidance from the same parental source. We have evidence of this original and natural tendency of the mind in what we notice every day, every hour. By a law of nature, the mind of the father becomes the mind of the child.

It was in this manner that man, at his first creation, recognized God as his teacher. He believed in God, and received him constantly as a source of inward inspiration. God was his knowledge. Such was the state of things before he fell. And such will always be the state of things, whenever, in being united with God, he is brought back to the simplicity and purity of his first estate.

6. Again, the child LOVES his father. The evidences of this are constantly exhibited. He rejoices with his father's joy, and weeps with his father's sorrow. The slightest injury to his father's honor is felt as an injury to his own. The true child would not hesitate to die for its father or mother, if the occasion presented. And this strong and permanent love is not a matter of calculation, but a nature. It is born with him, grows with him, lives with him. Blows will not beat it down; waters will not drown it; fires will not burn it.

At his first creation, man's love to his heavenly Father was like this, — a love implanted by a divine power, and kept in operation by a divine presence. He afterwards lost it, it is true; but he could not have lost it, if he had not first possessed it. As a moral being, man was allowed, and perhaps we may say, was expected

and required, to sanction the principles and methods of his inward vitality, by his own voluntary concurrence. Failing to do this, in a way and under circumstances which the human mind does not now perhaps fully understand, God withdrew himself as the central element of his being; and he became from that time the subject of spiritual alienation and death. But in his restoration to God through Christ, he is necessarily restored to the possession of that divine nature from which he fell. As he is made anew in faith and knowledge, so he is made anew in love. The lost principle of holy love is not only restored, but becomes again, under the transforming operations of divine grace, what it was in the beginning, namely, a *nature*, — an operative life, moved by a power of movement existing in itself. In other words, it once more becomes in relation to God what the child's love is in relation to its earthly father.

7. We proceed to remark, further, that the will of the child is naturally merged in the will of the father. There is a nature in this case, as there is in the others. The filial will is not harmonized in the parental will as a matter of calculation, but as the result of a mental tendency. There are, undoubtedly, some variations from this view, in consequence of the power of choice inherent in the will, and particularly in consequence of man's fallen condition; but what has been said is correct as a general statement. Accordingly, yielding readily to the tendency of their mental position, little children do what they are commanded to do. Sometimes it will cost them trouble and suffering; but this does not alter the general direction and the general inclinations of their feelings and actions. Subjecting their own wisdom to a higher wisdom, they have an instinctive feeling that their appropriate and first business is to harmonize with the

expression of a parent's will. And so strong is this tendency to a union of wills, that very frequently they act without knowing what will be the end of their action. It is natural to them to leave everything with their father, — the mode, the time, the object, and the results of action, as well as the action itself.

8. And this, in a remarkable manner, represents the state of things as it existed in man at his first creation. The will of Adam, before he fell, not only harmonized perfectly with the divine will, but naturally; that is to say, without effort, and by an implanted tendency. It is so with all holy beings now. It was eminently so, (as I think we may safely infer from the passages which indicate his submission and union of will,) with Christ, the second Adam; and it will be found to be so with all those who are restored again and perfected in Christ's image. What God chooses, they choose. What God wills, they will. The will becomes in relation to God what the will of the affectionate and dutiful child is to its earthly parent.

9. These views help to the better understanding of what was said in a former chapter in relation to the different kinds of union. Some of the remarks to which we refer were these: "Union, as we desire to develop it in this treatise, is not merely a treaty of peace, nor even the closer compact of alliance; but a combination or union of nature; not the union of juxtaposition, but of filiation; not the union of convention, but the union of life. It is to this union that all who are born of God must at last come; — not uniting with God, as man unites conventionally with his fellow-man, in the formation of civil society, or for any other purpose, but with that union of life with life, which binds together the father and the son."

With the illustrations which have just been given, it is to be hoped that this important and fundamental position will be more clearly understood. Undoubtedly the analogy would be more perfect, if the earthly parents and children had not fallen into sin. But still, with all the drawbacks which are attributable to that circumstance, it strikingly indicates what man was in the beginning, and what he is destined to be in the future; — not merely a servant, not merely a conventional coädjutor; but a son in the image of his Father, coming into existence in a true descent, and by the principle of a divine filiation.

10. It may be proper here to take into consideration, in a few words, the great objection which so frequently presents itself. It will be likely to be said that the idea of union with God, on the principle of a *nature*, is inconsistent with moral freedom. It may be replied, in the first place, that the subject of moral freedom, considered in any point of view, and in the light of any hypothesis, is attended with difficulties, when taken in connection, as it always ought to be, with the continual and perfect superintendence of God. Some of the ablest mental philosophers have recognized this difficulty without attempting to solve it; and we think, on a careful examination, it will not be found to be greater on the view which has now been presented, than it is on others.

11. With this general remark kept in mind, we proceed to the consideration of this topic in another light. Our general view of the matter, examined in a few words, is this. We take it for granted that the filial life, the life of the child, is properly designated, and that it in fact is, a NATURE; not, however, a *material* nature, which is wholly inflexible in its modes of operation, but a *mental* nature. Certain it is that men generally, per-

haps we may say without exception, speak of the affection of the son or daughter as a natural affection. At the same time we never regard the exercise of the affection, although it is allowedly an exercise of nature, as inconsistent with moral obligation. That is to say, the filial affection is a nature which is susceptible of a moral character. Accordingly, in the case of all persons, who freely and cheerfully allow the filial nature to act itself out as a nature, it must obviously be regarded as a nature which harmonizes with choice, and is sustained by choice. In other words, wherever it freely acts itself out as a nature, it is chosen and approved and aided as a nature by him who is the subject of it. All the powers of the mind are then consentingly and approvingly given in the right direction. And, in consequence of this harmony of a free choice with the instincts and tendencies of nature, we always look upon such persons with moral approbation.

God himself commends and approves such. "Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." It is natural to honor our father and mother; and yet there is so much of a moral quality in such honor that God distinctly approves and rewards it.

12. And, on the other hand, the obstruction of the operation and tendencies of this implanted nature by efforts of the will is regarded as an immorality. Such cases sometimes occur. There are some persons, who not only fail to sustain their filial nature by the hearty concurrence of the acts of the will, but resist its tendencies in various ways, and finally prostrate it. The contest, however, is generally a severe one. God respects his own work, and delights in it; and, accordingly, he endeavors to sustain it when it is assailed. But he also

respects and delights in that moral freedom and choice, which he has given to man. And whenever men, in the exercise of their volitional power, have resisted the laws and operations of God in the soul (we mean now the natural laws and operations) to a certain point, he abandons them; he leaves them to themselves; and they become *unnatural.* They have destroyed their nature, because God has ceased to sustain their nature against the neglect and opposition of their own wills. So that it is proper to say, (and there is fearful import in the words,) that the unnatural son and daughter, that the unnatural father and mother, are left of God.

A nature which can thus be sustained by our adoption and concurrence, or injured and sometimes destroyed by our opposition, harmonizes entirely with the principles of morals. So that the nature which constitutes the child what he is, is not more a filial nature than it is a moral nature.

13. And, in like manner, in once more becoming the children of God, we receive and retain a filial nature, but without ceasing to possess a moral nature. Much is involved in that free and full consecration which every true Christian is supposed to have made of himself to his heavenly Father. As free and moral agents, we consent now and forever, if we do what we ought to do, that God shall be a truth, a life, a nature in us; which he never has been and never will be without our consent. Adam before he fell, Christ in his humanity, angels in heaven, all holy beings everywhere, either have existed, or do now exist, as holy beings, by means of the operation of God in the soul; and yet without any alienation of their moral attributes and responsibilities, because they have received this operation with their own choice, and have sanctioned it by their own approbation.

With these explanations, we repeat that there is no true place of rest and safety, short of the reëstablishment of those relations which we have endeavored to illustrate. Accordingly, we cannot regard it as safe for any one to stop in the progress of inward experience, until he feels and knows that he has become, in the Scripture sense of the terms, a LITTLE CHILD; not only having a child's name, but a child's *nature*. And when this relation is reëstablished, not as a name merely, but as a reality, — not as a mere conventional arrangement, but as a true nature, — then, and not till then, we are brought into true union with our heavenly Father.

14. One remark more only remains to be added. It is on these principles, and these only, that we can make our position harmonize with our prayers. When we pray, we address God as our *Father*. This implies that we either are, or ought to be, his children. And our language throughout in prayer corresponds to the idea that our true position is the filial position. We pray that we may distrust and renounce ourselves, and look only to God for guidance and support. Recognizing our inability to supply our own wants, we pray for faith, for wisdom, for love, for the guidance of our wills. We go to him, in form at least, just as the little child goes to its earthly parent. If we will go in the same sincerity, our heavenly Father will recognize the relationship, and we shall thus become the true sons of God.

PART SIXTH.

ON UNION WITH GOD IN HIS PROVIDENCES.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE TRUE IDEA OF PROVIDENCE AND EXTENT.

Origin and meaning of the term providence. — Importance of the doctrine of Divine Providence. — Of the difference between a particular and a general providence. — Of the recognition of a particular providence by the heathen. — Of its recognition in the Scriptures. — The providence of God extends not only to individuals, but to families and nations.

The word providence is derived from the Latin term PROVIDENTIA, meaning watchfulness, care, oversight. As the term is commonly employed, it means the constant oversight or care which God exercises over all his works.

2. "The doctrine of divine providence," says a judicious writer, "is of the very first importance, and contributes greatly to the peace and happiness of human life. Were it not that God maintained a constant and watchful care over all his works, all piety would immediately cease. A God who did not concern himself in the affairs of the world, and especially in the actions of men, would be to us as good as none at all. In that case, should men live in a virtuous and pious manner, they would have no approbation to expect from him.

Should they be guilty of crimes, they would have no punishment to fear. Were they persecuted, they would think of God only as the idle witness of their wrongs. Were they in circumstances of suffering and sorrow, they could find no consolation if God were unmindful of them." *

3. In considering this important and interesting subject, it is proper to notice the distinction which is frequently made between a particular and general providence. It is certainly doubtful whether such a distinction ought to be made; — especially if the doctrine of a general providence is designed to supersede that of a particular providence. How can we readily conceive of a general providence, extending its watchfulness over things in their general aspects, which does not involve the fact of a particular providence, extending its watchfulness at the same time to those particulars, out of which that which is general is constituted? If there is a God, to whom the attributes usually ascribed to God belong, there is and must be a providence of God. If there is a providence of God extending with any degree of certainty, and with any good results, to things in their general nature, it extends to everything. We do not propose, however, to enter into an argument in support of a view which seems to us to be obvious of itself.

4. It is the rejection of the doctrine of providence, considered as entering into particulars, which constitutes one of the great evils, the practical atheism, perhaps we may call it, of the age in which we live. It is true, undoubtedly, that men, with but few exceptions, admit the existence of a God; but they do not admit, except in a very mitigated and imperfect sense, his presence and

* Lectures on Christian Theology, by George Christian Knapp.

supervision. They allow him a being, but they practically strike off its infinity, by assigning him a distant and strictly bounded locality. They allow him the privilege of casting a look down upon the world's affairs; but cannot bear the thought that the world does not and cannot go on without him. Here, then, is one of the great evils of the day, one of the secrets of our misery; the acknowledgment of God's existence, with the excision of his practical omnipresence; the recognition of God in general, but the rejection of him as God in particular.

5. One would be almost inclined to think that heathen nations are less faulty in this particular than those which bear the name of Christians. The untutored savage

"Sees God in clouds, and hears him in the wind."

Because an advanced knowledge in the sciences has explained many physical laws, men have fallen into the habit of ascribing to law what belongs to agency. And by thus attributing almost everything to what they denominate the laws of Nature, they forget the God of Nature. The mind of the savage, on the contrary, contemplating the result without understanding the law by which it is brought about, sees God in all the objects around him. It is God, dwelling in the cave of its fountain waters, who pours down the mighty rivers. It is the Great Spirit that sends the storm and the lightning from the mountain tops. It is God that shines in the sun, and walks in the clouds, and dwells even in four-footed beasts and creeping things. Here is a great truth, founded in the nature of God, although it is perverted and darkened in its development by the imperfection of fallen hearts. It is a truth, therefore, which ought to be respected. And the question may be put in all sin-

cerity: — Who would not rather be the superstitious savage than the unbelieving philosopher?

6. It is certainly necessary that science, bewildered in its own wanderings, should return at last, and baptize itself in the truth of the Scriptures; those Scriptures which constantly associate God with all his works. The beautiful Psalms, unequalled in poetry as they are in devotion, may be said to be built upon this great idea, which is equally philosophical and religious. Speaking of God, the Psalmist says, "*He* sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills. *He* watereth the hills from his chambers. *He* causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man. *He* hath planted the cedars of Lebanon, where the birds build their nests. *He* appointeth the moon for seasons; and the sun knoweth his going down. Thou makest darkness, and it is night, wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth. The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat *from God*." *

This is the spirit which pervades these divine poems. They everywhere represent the union of God with his works by an ever-present supervision and love. It is not a system of second causes, it is not nature, but *God*, who does all. It is God "who covers the heavens with clouds, who prepares rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains. He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry." †

The same spirit, the same devout disposition to recognize God in everything, pervades all parts of the Scriptures.

7. It is interesting to see how many passages there are in the Scriptures which speak of God's protection of animals, even of those which are the least considerable

* Psalm 104: 10, 20. † Psalm 147: 8, 9.

He takes care of the cattle of the fields; he feeds the young lions; he plants the cedars where the birds build their nests. "Behold the fowls of the air," says the Saviour, "for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them." It is not possible that he should take less care of man. Of all the existences on the earth, man stands the first, and God loves him most. The Saviour adds, for the comfort of those who heard him when speaking of God's care of the birds, "Are ye not much better than they?" As much as if he had said, the God who provides for them cannot fail to provide for you, who are so much more important in his estimation. And, in another passage, he says, "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings? And not one of them is forgotten before God. But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows."

8. Truly here is a great truth, worthy of our constant contemplation. Around every individual, no matter what may be his situation, is thrown the shield of the divine presence, love, and care. Every individual can say of himself, God is with *me*. He is not a God afar off. He knoweth my down-sitting and up-rising, my going out and my coming in. He not only knows, but he orders events concerning me.

Nor is there any limit to the divine presence and operation, except that which is interposed by unbelief. God will do all, operating in entire harmony with the laws of our mental constitution, if we only have faith enough to leave ourselves entirely in his hands, and let him do all. He will not, in the present state of things, so interpose and extend his own action as to prevent the concurrence of ours. But, nevertheless, he will unite

the two in such a manner that we shall recognize every good thing as coming from him. In reference to the daily support received from him, we shall be ready to say, with an eminent English writer, who had passed through many vicissitudes and trials, "I have been fed more by miracle than Elijah when the angels were his purveyors." *

9. He, who is the ever-present Guide and Father of the individual, is the Father also of family associations. All associations, which exist with the divine approbation, have a community of character and interest, which not only involves a common responsibility, but renders them susceptible of a common allotment. They can be guided, protected, and blessed in their common or associated position as truly as in that which is individual. "God setteth the solitary in families." Having established and recognized, in a multitude of instances, the family relation, he bestows his favor or disapprobation on families, according as they conform to or violate the ends for which they were established. The community principle is especially represented and consolidated in the father. If he is a man of prayer and faith, he is a channel of blessings to all the members. But if it be otherwise, they all suffer. God, operating in a little different manner in consequence of the new facts and relations existing, is the God of families as well as of individuals. If they endeavor to discharge their family duties in a proper manner, and look to him for guidance and assistance, they will not fail to find it. If they forget him, it will be a necessary result that they will be forgotten.

10. God, in the exercise of his providential care, is

* Daniel Defoe.

the Judge and Father also of great commonwealths. The idea that God should be united to man as an individual, and in his relation to families, but forgetful of and alien to those bodies of men which are denominated civil societies, — governing the one, and leaving the other without government, — would be exceedingly absurd. If he cannot abandon a man, nor the hair of a man's head, how can he abandon a nation or any part of a nation's interests? It is an obvious dictate of reason, therefore, that he who is watchful over the less, will be careful of the greater; that he, who watches over the members of the body, will take care of the whole body, if he has the power and qualifications to do so; and that he, who is the head of the citizen, *a fortiori*, if his capacity equals the impulses of his benevolence, will be the head of the state.

11. And it is certain that what is reasonable in this case is also scriptural. The Bible everywhere represents God as the God of nations. How often is it said, in Daniel, in Job, in the Psalms, and everywhere, that "the kingdom is the Lord's;" that "He is Governor among the nations;" that He "removes and sets up kings!" What was the language which David used in his great contest with the Philistine chief, — young as he was, and just come from the flocks and the pastures of Bethlehem? "Thou comest to me," said David, "with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come unto thee *in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel*, whom thou hast defied. This day will the *Lord* deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee. And I will give the carcasses of the hosts of the Philistines unto the fowls of the air and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a

God in Israel. And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear; for the battle is the *Lord's*, and *He* will give you into our hands."

What was the declaration of the Spirit of the Lord, by the mouth of his prophet, to Jehoshaphat, king of Judah? "Thus saith the Lord unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but *God's*. Ye shall not need to fight in this battle; set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the Lord with you, O Judah and Jerusalem; fear not, nor be dismayed; to-morrow go out against them, for *the Lord will be with you.*" And it is added, after some account of the great victory which the Lord gave: "So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet; for *his God gave him rest round about.*" *

12. The doctrine, that God in his providence is to be recognized as the God of all societies and nations, is not only sustained by reason and by the Scriptures, but the facts which are presented in history constantly and clearly confirm it. To the eye of a disciplined and comprehensive faith, the footsteps of God, as they are left in the great pathway of nations, are as plain as if they were impressed and written there in letters of light. God is to be found in the dust of Nineveh and the ruins of Thebes. If he raised them to mighty power, he also, in the day of his righteous retribution, clothed them in sackcloth, and made them desolate. It was God who planted the Israelites in Egypt in the condition of slavery, and who afterwards employed them in the punishment of their masters, and then led them to the overthrow of the corrupt nations of Palestine. The Israel-

* 2d Chron ch. 20.

ites themselves had their day of progress and decline, according as they walked in God's ways, or were disobedient. It was God, making the crime of human ambition the blind but effective instrument in fulfilling his own mighty purposes, who called the Assyrians from the banks of the Euphrates to the overthrow of the Israelites. The Assyrians, in their turn, with Babylon, their immense city, fell under the arm of the destroyer God found an instrument of his mighty purposes where none was supposed to exist. He raised up the Persian Cyrus, and called him by name many years before his birth, and said, "I will go before thee." And again, "I am the Lord, and there is none else; there is no God besides me. I girded thee, though thou hast not known me." — Isa. 45 : 8.

The contemplative mind will see, in the history of all nations, not excepting those of modern times, the evidences of an overruling Providence. They stand or fall as they stand in or out of God. When nations have obeyed him, they have lived. When they have forgotten him, they have been destroyed. To forget God is to sin. And all sin has in itself an element of self-destruction. It is internal disorganization and weakness as well as immorality. And it is not in the power of God, while it continues sin, and is thus placed out of the reach of his protection, to save it either from decay or sorrow. With no divine arm under it, it is prostrated by its own recumbence. But as it lies scattered and decayed in the ashes of successive generations, it shows the burning footprints of the divine displeasure.

13. Such is the true idea of Divine Providence; extending to all things which exist, to things animate and inanimate, organized and unorganized, to plants, and trees, and animals, to men, to families, to nations; wide

as the universe, sleepless as the divine omniscience, effective as the supreme power; always holding in respect, however, the moral freedom of all moral agents, and inviting, without forcibly compelling, them to accept that daily bread of superintendence and love which is the true element of everlasting life.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE LAW OF PROVIDENCE IN DISTINCTION FROM THE GENERAL NATURE OR FACT OF PROVIDENCE.

Of the distinction between Providence and the law of Providence.— Of the foundation of the law of Providence. — Illustrations of the subject. — Of the harmony of the providential law, and the law of the Scriptures. — Practical remarks.

In the preceding chapter we have endeavored to illustrate what we consider to be the true idea of Providence, considered both in its nature and its extent. But it should be remembered that Providence is one thing; the *law* of Providence is another. Providence is God's arrangement of things and events in the world, including his constant supervision. The *law* of Providence, in distinction from Providence in itself considered, is the RULE OF ACTION, which is contained in, and which is developed from, this providential arrangement.

2. We cannot well understand and appreciate the doctrine of the law of Providence without some proper view of the mutual relationship and connection of things. It was a maxim of the Schoolmen, and is not less a maxim of nature, NIHIL EX NIHILO FIT. Everything, therefore, which exists, if it do not have an existence which is eternal and independent, must come from a common source. Consequently, there must be some common relationships, some common alliances.

And this is just as true of events which exist in time as of things which exist in place. It is true of everything of which it can be said, *it is*. If God calls into existence, or, in any way, gives rise to certain things and events and establishes them in their order, which, as a "God of order," he cannot fail to do, he necessarily gives to them their position, their relations, their rights, their influences. All these are theirs by the nature of the case. They do not make them of themselves, but have them, as it were, by inheritance. It is not easy to see how it can be otherwise. It is a matter of necessity, although we may properly make a distinction between things and events in some respects, that they should have their place and relations, their appropriate rights, their appropriate effects.

3. We will endeavor to illustrate what we mean, in the first place, from things which have merely an animate, and not a moral, existence. Among the multitude of created things that fill the air and earth, behold the feeble worm that makes its home in the clod. God has created it. Here is a fact, unimportant as it may seem to be, which makes a part, nevertheless, of his providential arrangements. The fact of the creation of this worm involves the fact of a sphere of life; that is to say, an appropriate place of residence, and adequate means of protection and support. This little animal has not only its assigned place and its means of protection, but it has its rights and claims also in relation to other beings; rights which reach from the dust in which it crawls to the infinite throne, and are as unchangeable as immutable justice. Infinite holiness holds its ægis over this weak creature. Continually the burning eye of Jehovah watches in order to see who invades its sphere, and does it an injury. The protection which is

assured to it is not measured by the fact of its strength, but by the fact of its existence. God cannot create a being without, at the same time, pledging his friendship to it. The providence of God, therefore, cannot place a worm by our side without establishing a code of laws between us. The traveller, who sees it crawling in the dust, is obliged to turn aside his foot. The obligation binds the tread of a king as clearly and strongly as the tread of a peasant. He who crushes it without a justifiable cause violates the moral order of things, and tramples on the eternal will of the Creator.

4. Still more easily is the subject illustrated from other instances, where the rights of human beings are involved. Not far distant from a certain rich man's residence is a very poor family. One of its children has been infirm and helpless from birth; and nothing but the aid of others, more favored in their circumstances, can save it from the greatest suffering. The position of the child, with its wants and sufferings, is a PROVIDENCE. The duty, which devolves upon the rich man to take an interest in its welfare, and to render it aid, is the *law* of Providence. The law is developed from existing things; but, as the things existing are from God, the law which they disclose and establish is from him also. And he, who will not see a worm trampled upon without displeasure, will never see an injury done to an immortal being with impunity.

5. And it is thus with everything. Things animate and things inanimate, things in space and things in time, things said and things done, all being and all action, in themselves and in their relations, in their rights and in their influences, form a part of the great system of the facts and arrangements of divine Providence. Man, and all the acts and all the sufferings of which he is the

source and the subject, is placed in the midst of this great ocean; this great and moving flux and reflux of other men, and other acts, and other sufferings, and is required to be in moral harmony with it. It is this *requisition*, this rule, existing under these circumstances, which constitutes the *providential law*, — a law operating from the external upon the internal; a law founded in infinite wisdom, just and inflexible in its requirements, just and inflexible in its retributions.

6. The law of Providence coincides with the law of the Scriptures. God, who speaks in Providence as well as in the Scriptures, cannot utter voices which, in their principles and claims, are discordant with each other. We may sometimes fail in our interpretations of the Scriptures; we may sometimes attach a meaning to them different from God's meaning; but when the declaration of God in the Scriptures is rightly understood, it will always be found to harmonize with his providential voice. If, for instance, he requires us, in his written law, to love our neighbor as ourselves, he has also arranged in such a manner the things and relations which constitute his providential law as to make the same requisition. And it will be found true, under the operation of the divine Providence, that man will and must suffer just in proportion as he comes short of that divine law of love. It will be the same in other similar instances.

7. In view of this important subject, so far as it has now been developed, a number of practical remarks may properly be made here; and one is, that it is an important part of Christian duty to study God's will in his providences. We neither know how to act, nor how to feel, without a regard to them. This remark is sufficiently obvious in relation to action. It is hardly less obvious in relation to *feeling*. For instance, a near friend dies, per-

haps a child, or brother. This is an *event in Providence.* The feeling appropriate to it is SORROW; but, when we consider that, being an event in Providence, it is an event ordered in divine wisdom, the appropriate feeling is not only sorrow, but sorrow mingled with acquiescence and patience. The law of Providence requires this modification of the feeling as strictly and as truly as the written law; so that we may lay it down as a principle, that the law of Providence must regulate, to a considerable extent, not only our outward acts, but our affections. It is Providence which places before us the objects we must love; and, what is more, it indicates the degree of our love, and the ways of its manifestation. And, on the other hand, the same Providence indicates to us the objects which should excite our disapprobation, and also the degree and manner of our disapprobation.

8. Another remark is this. If we are in full harmony with Providence, we walk in all things humbly and softly, neither too slow nor too fast. The light which is imparted to us, is given moment by moment. And it is the true light, if our souls are so far renovated into the nature of Christ as to be in a disposition to receive it. It teaches us, not only to work FOR God, but, what is hardly less important, to work WITH God; — that is to say, in harmony with his own wise and benevolent plans.

9. Again, in acting in accordance with Providence, we do good without doing evil. No matter how desirable a thing may appear to be to us, if the law of Providence stands in our way, it cannot be done. There is, in such a case, what is called a moral, in distinction from a physical, impossibility, because the thing cannot be done without violating other obligations. Therefore, we are to do the good which we are *called to do;* in other words,

we are to do the good which Providence allows and requires us to do; and then, and then only, we do good without doing evil. It is desirable that those who aim at the highest results in religion, should keep this in mind.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE STRICTNESS OF THE RETRIBUTIONS OF THE LAW OF PROVIDENCE.

Of the opinions which prevail on this subject. — Reference to physical laws. — Illustrations of the subject from civil and criminal laws. — The providential law more inflexible in its results than other laws. — Illustrations of this truth. — Of violations of Providence when the motives are good. — Of the regulation of the affections. — Illustrations and remarks.

In the last chapter reference was made to the inflexibility of the providential law. It is strict and inflexible both in its requirements and in its retributions. It has in itself a power of punishment, which evil-doers cannot escape.

This is a subject of so much importance, that we propose to examine it further, and more particularly, in this chapter; especially as the doctrine of a providential retribution, invariably inflicted, is not generally received. It does not appear to be the common opinion.

2. There seems to be good reason for saying, that common opinion, founded upon the general experience, assents to the strictness and inflexibility of the action of physical laws. If a man, for instance, thrusts his hand into the fire, we have no doubt that he will be burned If he plunges himself into the depths of the ocean, we are confident that he will be drowned. If he throws himself down a rocky eminence, we naturally expect that he will be dashed to pieces. The result, secured by known and inflexible physical laws, is considered certain.

It may be added, that common opinion attaches the same idea of strictness and inflexibility to the action of laws instituted by civil governments. If a man, contrary to the laws of the land, takes another's property, it is generally regarded as a matter of certainty that punishment will overtake him. If a man strikes another, the law, without regard to his position in society, or even his penitence, strikes him in return. Fines, stripes, stocks, prisons, show how inflexible is the arm of civil and criminal justice.

But it does not appear to be the common opinion that the retributions of the providential law are equally strict, equally inflexible. The tendency is, partly because its modes of operation are less obvious to the senses, to look upon Providence as a lenient master, who generally defers punishment, who punishes slightly at most, and sometimes not at all. But this is a mistake. The providential law is as strict in its operation as the others, and even more so. It is possible, certainly, that natural laws may be suspended in their operation, and may fail. The penalty of the civil and criminal laws may sometimes be evaded. But the retributions of the providential law, (a law modified in its application by the incident of existing facts and events, but always founded on the principles of eternal right and wrong,) can never be annulled, can never be escaped.

3. If the providence of God has brought together a rich and a poor man, under such circumstances that it becomes the duty of the rich man to aid the poor, and he refuses to do it, it is impossible for him, in any way, except by sincere repentance, to escape the penalty of his wrong-doing. He will ask, perhaps, why he was bound to support or aid the poor man more than another? The answer is, it was not necessary that all

should confer their benevolence at the same time; and the law of Providence, operating in connection with the existing facts in the case, made its selection, and the lot fell upon him. The fact that Providence had given him a particular location, involved also the assignment of a particular duty. In refusing to perform that duty, he has exposed himself to a penalty. When or where it will come, he cannot foresee; but its terrible advent is inevitable in its appointed time.

A man has a family, or is in some way connected with one. He is a father, brother, husband, or son. Perhaps he sustains all these important relations at once. He has a moral nature; and Providence, which makes all these arrangements, has assigned and settled his position. Out of his moral nature and the position which is thus assigned him, is developed the obligation or law of specific duty. We properly denominate it, in this case, as in others, the providential law. As a father, brother, husband, or son, he has duties to perform, which would not be binding upon him if he were not placed in that particular situation. If he fails in those duties, whatever their nature, and whether the failure be more or less, he incurs a penalty, which may not be particularly noticed or felt at the time, but from which there is and can be no escape.

There is no apparent administration. There is nothing exterior, nothing seen. No judge is seated on the bench of justice. No audible sentence is pronounced. No prison doors are shut or opened. No sword is uplifted. And yet the blow falls, — reaching always the precise centre of its object, — the sharper for being invisible; as inflexibly certain in its movement and its results as the decrees of infinite wisdom.

4. We proceed now to a remark of no small impor-

tance. The strictness of the providential law is such, that the penalty attending a violation of it will be experienced, whether the object which we had in view in our conduct be good or evil. In other words, God, as the administrator of Providence, will punish us for actions, originating in a good motive, if that motive has been exercised without a careful regard to the facts in the case.

If a father, for instance, from the impulse of benevolent parental feeling, gives a large amount of property to a son, who obviously has no capacity and no heart to manage it aright, he violates a providential law, by attempting to unite things which are incompatible, and the most painful results will sooner or later ensue. If a benevolent man has a poor but very vicious neighbor, and, without any suitable reflections upon the matter, bestows upon him liberal donations, he obviously does a wrong thing, although he may have meant it right. He thus sets himself, perhaps without any specific intentions of that nature, in opposition to the providential design; and is found in the ruinous situation of one who is fighting against God. God knows what is best. He sees that, to the vicious man, who expends his wealth upon his lusts, poverty, yea, *extreme poverty*, is the best riches.

6. It should never be forgotten, that a good motive, however kindly and highly it may be appreciated, does not constitute a right action in the strict sense of the term, unless the action can be spoken of and regarded as right in the circumstances actually existing. It is a very important principle, therefore, especially in its connection with the higher forms of religious experience, that we ought with care to watch over even our good desires, and to bring them under a strict regulation. Our

good desires, our good intentions, will not save ourselves or others from evil, if we contemplate and carry into effect objects which are *out of the divine order.*

The instances which have already been given, help to illustrate the subject. Very many others will readily occur. A monarch, for instance, in the largeness of his heart, proposes the immediate and entire liberation of his people, notwithstanding they are obviously unprepared for it. But in thus doing an act, which, under other circumstances, would be highly commendable, he only places in the nation's hand a sword to be plunged into its own vitals. His good intentions will not shield him from responsibility. Subjecting his benevolence to the dictates of deliberation and wisdom, he should have first made his gift, not to freedom, but to the *preparation* for freedom.

7. And these remarks will apply, not to one merely, but to all the purest and holiest affections of our nature. Such affections are always good and commendable in themselves; but, in the manner and degree of their exercise, they are necessarily subjected to the law of time, place, and object. It is certainly commendable and right, at all times and under all circumstances, to entertain feelings of kindness and compassion for those who suffer. But it is not commendable and right, at all times and under all circumstances, to attempt to *relieve* that suffering. And the reason is, that God, in his wise providence, has seen fit to impose suffering. Suffering, therefore, has its own, its appropriate work to do. And mere human pity cannot interfere with these providential intentions, without committing great error, and without experiencing a retribution on itself.

8. We may, perhaps, deduce an illustration of the strictness of the law of Providence from the law of

nature. We all know that if our action — that of the husbandman, for instance — does not conform to the law of physical nature, it has no reward, but is the occasion of loss. Accordingly, we never exhibit the folly of scattering our wheat and corn on the frozen clods of autumn and on the snowbanks of winter, because we know that it is entirely useless, and worse than useless, to anticipate, as we should thus do, the preparations of nature. Whatever we may do, we shall always find, if we would do it with any good results, that God must go first, and strike the first blow. Our business is, both in connection with the works of nature, and in morals and religion, to act *concurrently*, to follow him, and, without running before him, to strive to be *co-workers* with him. It is with this great practical religious principle in view, that the Saviour says, "Give not that which is holy to the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." It is this principle, also, which is the foundation of the important remark of the apostle in his epistle to the Romans, "Let not, then, your good be evil spoken of."*

9. We return, therefore, to the great truth, which we wish to be left deeply impressed upon the mind; namely, that we can neither do good nor evil, irrespective of the law of Providence, without incurring guilt, and without experiencing a painful retribution. And this retribution, although it may scarcely be noticed at first, and although it may be delayed for a long time, is as certain and irresistible, with the single exception of cases of timely repentance, as the existence of God himself.

Even the man who stands in the divine order, and is a co-worker with God, is not, in the present state of

* Rom. 14: 16.

things, exempt from trouble. Perhaps it is for this very thing God has placed him where he is; namely, that sorrow, in its various forms, that rebuke, and evil-speaking, and loss of earthly goods, and other temporal evils, may come upon him, and, in the fire of their consuming contact, destroy the dross that still adheres to his soul. But standing, as he does, with God before him as his guide, and therefore in the way of God's appointment, he will in the end come off victorious. But, for him who stands out of the divine order, and who opposes the weak shield of human strength to God's irreversible arrangements, there is no help. The chariot wheels of the Almighty will pass over him and grind him to powder.

CHAPTER IV.

OF PROVIDENCE IN CONNECTION WITH MAN'S SITUATION IN LIFE.

Providence designates our situation in life. — Of the difference in our allotment. — God assigns our place, but leaves to us the dispositions with which we shall receive it. — The position of Providence our true home. — Also the only true place of safety. — Of inward retirement, or solitude.

That divine superintendence, which is denominated Providence, extends not only to every individual, but to all that pertains to every individual; including, among other things, all the various circumstances and situations of his life. Without delaying its operation for a single day, it indicates man's locality in the very beginning of his existence. In combination with the natural or physical law, which is its instrument, it places him in the cradle, under the eye of his father and mother. Helpless, but not unprotected, it is the watchful hand of Providence, using more or less of earthly instrumentality, which feeds him, clothes him, teaches him. It is Providence, also, as he exchanges childhood for youth, and thus gradually enlarges the boundaries of his habitation, which scatters both thorns and flowers in his path; — the one to cheer him to activity and duty, and the other to warn him of danger, and to deter him from sin. From the early locality of the cradle and the parental hearth, from the lines drawn around him by the domestic circle

where he is first placed, he never moves a step, he never goes, and never can go, rightfully and safely, except by divine permission.

2. It is one of the first principles in the doctrines of holiness, that men should remain patiently and quietly where God has placed them, until they receive from himself the intimations of departure. It was thus that Jesus grew up in the humble retirement of a carpenter's family, a brother among brothers and sisters, obeying his parents in love, eating and drinking at their common table, sympathizing in their joys and sorrows, laboring daily with those who were brought up in the same form of labor, and regarding the yoke of his earthly position as entirely light and easy, because it was the yoke of his heavenly Father's providence. He remained there till that unerring Providence, arranging around him other circumstances, and arousing within him desires corresponding to those circumstances, led him forth from the quiet home of Mary and Joseph, to the trials and duties of a new position, — to persecution and death. How different was his conduct from that of the rebellious and unhappy youth of whom he has given an account in one of his affecting parables! The prodigal son, in the pride of self-wisdom and self-will, demanded his share of his father's goods before the time, which was rapidly drawing nigh, when the arrangements of Providence would have freely offered them. As he went forth in violation of the providential law, which required him to wait till a later period, he went forth without the presence and approbation of the God of providence, and found, in the famine and wretchedness of a distant land, that sure retribution which always follows any movement made in our own strength and choice.

3. The first position, then, in which man is placed

by Him who overrules all things in goodness, is that of dependence and guardianship within the limits of the family circle. Gradually the hand of Providence opens the door, and he goes out; but it is only into another department, or, perhaps we should say, into another line of demarcation, drawn by One who is invisible. As the child advances to youth, and from youth to manhood, and as he acquires the wisdom of maturer age and the increased strength of virtue, he is invited, under the guidance of that unseen Power, who proportions our trials to our strength, to different and perhaps more responsible scenes and duties. The hand, which at first restricted him to his father's home, and prescribed its limited duties, now points him to a wider sphere of endurance and action, as well as of joy and sorrow. Hidden in the vast and impenetrable future, no one can tell beforehand what that sphere will be. He may be called to labor in the field or the workshop, and, with his shepherd's staff or his plough, he may be either the master or the servant. He may be employed as the humble teacher of children in the elements of knowledge, or may be constituted a lawgiver in the halls of a national legislature. He may be the physician of the sick, and eminent in the gifts of healing, or he may himself be the inmate of a hospital, and be administered to by others, through long years of pain and despondency. To-day he is on a throne, — to-morrow in a prison.

4. Men, it is true, are often disposed to quarrel with God's providential arrangements. And the reason is, that the doctrine of providence implies that, in all situations, there is a God above and around us. But, however humbling the doctrine of special providence is to human pride and human reason, the simple and sublime fact still remains. God makes us, and God places us

In the language of Scripture, "A man's heart deviseth his way; *but the Lord directeth his steps.*" The hand of a higher power has marked out the lines of our habitation. He builds up one, and casts down another. It does not depend upon man's talents, nor upon his education, nor upon his wealth, nor upon his friends, nor upon anything else that is human, what he shall be, or whether, in the worldly sense of the term, he shall be anything; where he shall go, or whether he shall go anywhere; but *upon God alone.*

God makes the arrangement; but the disposition with which we shall receive that arrangement, he leaves to ourselves. And let this satisfy us. In every arrangement which he makes, his aim is our highest good; but whether it will result in our highest good, depends upon the spirit in which we accept it. He never violates our moral liberty; and if, in the exercise of that liberty, we put our thoughts and our feelings in his keeping, he will give a heart so correspondent to our habitation, that our cottage will be beautiful in our sight as a palace, and the darkness of our dungeon as bright as the open day.

5. In connection with what has been said, there are a number of remarks yet remaining to be made. And one is, that the enclosure of Providence, the place of his habitation which God has chosen for him, is a man's *only true home.* There is no other; there can be no other. Let no sigh arise from his bosom; let no tear escape him, because his dwelling place, rough-hewn, perhaps, and built upon the rocks, is less beautiful than his neighbor's. Of one it can be said, "His lines have fallen to him in pleasant places, and he has a goodly heritage." Of another it can be said, with equal truth, "His house is left to him desolate." Nevertheless, if he stands within the demarcations of Providence, he occupies

the place which the highest wisdom could design for him; he stands in his own true home, and he has no other.

6. Another remark is, that the position of Providence is the only place of safety. It is not safe for man, in violation of God's arrangements, to move beyond the line which God has marked out for him. It is not safe for him to have the smallest desire to go beyond it, or even to cast a look beyond it. Beyond this high and real barrier, — real though erected by an unseen hand and invisible to the outward sight, — there are temporal and, perhaps, spiritual riches, which are not ours, and which we are not allowed to reach after. The wealth which is beyond that line is destined for the possession of others. The crown of earthly honors which shines beyond that limit is not destined for our heads. Public religious instructions, no matter how rich and how true, which are given by religious teachers beyond that limit, are designed for others, and not for us. Even the private society of religious persons, however devoted they may be, is interdicted when it can be had only in violation of the divine limits. We must thus sacrifice the richest privileges and gifts, both spiritual and temporal, to the arrangements of Providence, in order that we may retain and enjoy, what is infinitely more valuable, *the God of Providence.*

Keep with God in God's place, and thou shalt not only find inward riches, but inward and outward safety. The lines drawn around us by the providential law, constitute a "holy city," a "new Jerusalem," to those who dwell in it in faith, and who take God as their everlasting light. To such, contented with their allotment, whatever may be its temporal aspects, God will never fail to yield his presence and protection. "Only believe."

7. Another remark to be made is this. In order to

keep the mind in that spiritual seclusion which is implied in being truly united with God, it is not necessary that we should quit our ordinary duties, and separate from our fellow-men. If the solitary places of forests and mountains are not interdicted, it is certain that they are not absolutely necessary. The man is in the true seclusion, the true spiritual retirement, who is shut up in the inclosures of Providence, with willingness and joy in being so. When we are in harmony with Providence, we are in harmony with God; and harmony with God implies all that seclusion from the world which is necessary. This is the true solitude. In its external forms it may be more or less. It may restrict us to the limits of a sick chamber; it may compress us within the walls of a prison; it may lead us for a time to the most retired and lonely place of meditation and worship; or it may allow us, on the other hand, the widest range of business and intercourse, and mingle us with the largest multitudes of men. But, whether its lines are stricter or more expanded, it is the true solitude, the place of retirement which God has chosen, the select and untrodden hermitage where the soul may find and delight itself with its Beloved.

8. In connection with the general views of this chapter, and the particular suggestions which naturally arise from them, we are reminded of the statements, often occurring in experimental writers, that the truly godly person is *exempt from desire*. The meaning is, that such a person is exempt from perverted or unholy desire. And the form of expression arises from the fact, that his desires so perfectly harmonize with the divine arrangements, and are so perfectly met in the occurrences of each moment, that he is hardly conscious of their existence. It is the same thing as to be in perfect harmony with Providence.

CHAPTER V.

ON THE WISDOM AND GOODNESS OF GOD, AS DISPLAYED IN HIS PROVIDENTIAL ARRANGEMENTS.

The arrangements of Providence often mysterious. — Their wisdom and goodness visible only to the eye of faith. — Illustrations of the subject. — Reference to the history of Moses. — Illustrations from profane history. — Reference to Bunyan and Milton. — Remarks.

Some of the views of the last chapter admit of further illustrations. We have seen that the allotments of men in the present life, like things in external and material nature, are exceedingly diversified. And it must be admitted that, to human view, these diversities are oftentimes mysterious. It is not easy for men to see — certainly not in all cases — the wisdom of that arrangement which makes one poor, and another rich; which confines one to a particular spot, but enlarges and diversifies the habitation of another; which places one on a throne, another in a dungeon. It should not be forgotten, however, that it is God who does it all; and, to the eye of faith, everything which he does is full of wisdom and goodness, however it may appear to those who see only with human wisdom.

2. In one of the retired streets of yonder city there lives an honest and laborious mechanic. His daily walk is limited by the few rods which separate his house from his workshop. Arrived at his place of labor in the morning, he toils from morning till night within the limited

space of a few feet in circumference. From day to day, and from year to year, the muscles of his arm are lifted at the same anvil, or are turning at the same wheel. An unseen hand, which is acquainted with all localities, has drawn the lines around him, and planted him there for life. He is a prisoner, if we may so express it, in the Lord's captivity. But it would be a sad mistake, if he should suppose that this providential arrangement is instituted without wisdom and without goodness. Though he will probably never wander beyond those narrow boundaries, yet that place, of all the places in the universe, is the best one for him. We do not say it appears best to human wisdom, which is incapable of judging, but is best in the view of Him who has assigned it. Happy will it be for him if he does not doubt. Believing that He who has given him life has constituted his habitation, let it be his aim to harmonize his feelings with his position, and thus the principle of faith, whatever view the world may take of him, will make him a happy child in his Father's house.

3. In early life I was acquainted with a woman, a resident of the village of my youth, whose memory is recalled by these considerations. In her earlier — I will not say her better — days, she held a leading position in society, to which she seemed to be well entitled by great excellence and intelligence of character, as well as by wealth. In the alternations and reverses of the times, her property was entirely lost; her husband died; all her near relatives died also, or were scattered abroad, and she was left entirely alone. She was supported in her old age at the public expense; but, out of respect to her character, the town authorities permitted her to occupy a single room in the house which she had formerly owned. At the time I became acquainted with her, she

was nearly seventy years of age, and had long been unable to leave her room without assistance. But she was far from supposing that God, in depriving her of friends and property, and in confining her in her old age to these narrow limits, was unkind. Her constant companions were her Bible and a few old books on practical and experimental religion. She had faith. No complaint escaped from her lips. In the walls of her little room she felt herself far more closely and lovingly encircled by the arms of her heavenly Father, than if she had been left in the greatest enlargements of society. A plant in the Lord's garden, closely hemmed in, but diligently nurtured, she resembled that patriarch, who is described as "a fruitful bough, *whose branches run over the wall.*"

4. The Bible is full of instances and illustrations of the subject. The patriarch Moses, in particular, furnishes us a lesson in relation to it. Such were the arrangements of God's providence, that he found it necessary to quit the aspiring hopes which he had once entertained of being the immediate deliverer of his people, and to flee from the splendid court of Pharaoh into the deserts of Arabia Petræa. For forty years he tended his flocks in the vicinity of Mount Sinai, exchanging the palaces of Egypt for a rude home in the distant and solitary rocks. Undoubtedly it seemed very mysterious to Moses that he should thus be dealt with. He did not then understand that God, in thus leading him into the wilderness, and making him acquainted with the vast desert between the Nile and the Red Sea, was preparing him for the dangerous task of being a leader of his people through these very deserts and mountains.

But this was not all. His manners and intellect had been trained in the court of the Pharaohs; but God, who is a greater teacher than kings, saw it necessary

that his spirit should be disciplined and trained in the wilderness. It was there that he learned, more fully than he had ever understood it before, the lesson of a present and special Providence. Taken from the bulrushes and placed in a palace, and then taken from a palace and placed for forty years in a lonely desert, he felt deeply that God selects and arranges the habitations of men; and that it is man's great business, submitting on religious principles to the arrangements of Providence, to harmonize his inward state with his outward situation.

And, besides that, he wanted all this time and all this solitariness of place, in order to break up his early and unfavorable associations, to chasten and subdue his natural pride, and to imbibe that wise and gentle quietude of spirit which is one of the surest signs of a soul that dwells with God.

5. It was in the prisons of Egypt that Joseph received that discipline which fitted him to be the great Egyptian ruler. It was when he was tending his father's flocks in Bethlehem, or when he was driven into mountains and caverns, that the hand and soul of David were trained and strengthened to the great task of holding a nation's sceptre. Daniel was taught of God in the lion's den; and Paul was aided in learning the great lesson of entire dependence, when he could find no escape from persecution, and perhaps from death, but by being let down by a basket over the wall of Damascus.

6. Profane history, also, as well as the Bible, furnishes illustrations of the subject. Along the streets of the city of Bedford, in England, the poor and illiterate preacher, John Bunyan, is conducted to prison. Years roll on; to human appearance all his earthly prospects are cut off; he has no books with the single exception of the Bible

and the Lives of the Martyrs. Had he not been imprisoned, he would have lived and died, as do many other men, known perhaps, and useful, within the limits of a single town, and for a single generation. But, shut up in prison, and cut off from worldly plans, God was enabled to work in him, in his own wonderful way, and to guide his mind to other and higher issues. It was there he wrote that remarkable work, the Pilgrim's Progress. Had his enemies not been allowed to prevail against him, it probably would not have been written. It was thus that God turned that which was designed for evil into good. It was a wisdom higher than man's wisdom, which shut up the pilgrim himself in prison. The Pilgrim's Progress, which was the result of the imprisonment of the pilgrim whose progress it describes, free as the winds of heaven, goes from house to house, knocks at every heart, teaches all classes, visits all nations.

7. Nearly at the same time with the pious individual to whom we have just referred, there lived in England another person, whose extraordinary powers of intellect and imagination were developed and cultivated in the best institutions of that country. In the revolutionary contests of that period, his pen, exuberant with the riches of thought and eloquence, was frequently employed with great effect. He became blind. The sun, the pleasant sky, the societies of men, were all shut out from him. "These eyes," he says in one of the sonnets written in his blindness,

> "Bereft of light, their seeing have forgot;
> Nor to their idle orbs doth sight appear
> Of sun, or moon, or stars, throughout the year,
> Or man or woman."

He was, indeed, in a dark and solitary place; but it

was God, who, in the administration of his providence, constructed it for him. And there, in what seemed to the world a lonely prison-house, the light of the soul grew bright in the darkness of the body; and he wrote the Paradise Lost. In the enlargements of his own will, when he went where he chose to go, he gave his powers, too great to be thus limited, to a party; but, in what may be termed the solitude and captivity of God, he gave himself to religion and to mankind.

8. Wisdom can never be separated from providence, nor can goodness. And the darker the providence, the greater the wisdom. Souls that are formed for great and good purposes are so especially the objects of Providence in its most mysterious arrangements, that they may be called, with scarcely a metaphorical use of the expression, *the prisoners of God*. For reasons which are perfectly known only to himself, they are hedged in by him on every side. He does with them what he thinks best; and he does not allow them, in the exercise of their own wisdom, to think what is best for themselves, because he intends to make them the subjects of his teachings, as well as the instruments of his own designs. The way in which he leads them is not only a narrow one, and built up with walls on every side, but is often precipitous, and, to human sight, full of dangers. But out of that road they find, if they follow the true light, they have no liberty to go; and in it they must receive, not what they might choose, but what God sees fit to give them. He smites them, and he heals them: he pours light upon their path, or he leaves them in sudden darkness. "They are clay in the hands of the potter." They are broken to pieces, that out of their earthly fragments he may build up a heavenly habitation. He makes them nothing, that they may have divine

strength. He cuts them loose from the creature, that they may be made receptive of the Creator. But in everything there is wisdom. Men may not see it; but it is there.

THE LIGHT ABOVE US.

There is a light in yonder skies,
A light unseen by outward eyes; —
But clear and bright to inward sense,
It shines, the star of Providence.

The radiance of the central throne,
It comes from God, and God alone; —
The ray that never yet grew pale,
The star, that "shines within the veil."

And faith, unchecked by earthly fears,
Shall lift its eye, though filled with tears,
And while around 'tis dark as night,
Untired, shall mark that heavenly light.

In vain they smite me, — men but do
What God permits, with different view; —
To outward sight they wield the rod,
But faith proclaims it all of God.

Unmoved, then, let me keep my way,
Supported by that cheering ray,
Which, shining distant, renders clear
The clouds and darkness thronging near.*

*Life of Madame Guyon, vol. ii. p. 317

CHAPTER VI.

ON THE RELATION OF PROVIDENCE TO SPIRITUAL GROWTH.

The arrangements of Providence to the spiritual growth what the earth is to natural growth. — The analogy between the two extended to particulars. — Importance of remaining quiet under the operations of Providence. — Illustrations of the subject. — Remarks.

We proceed now to a view of Providence, which commends itself to the special consideration of Christians. Providence, considered as the divine arrangement of things in relation to men, is the Lord's spiritual garden. It is to the spiritual growth what the earth is to the germination and growth of material products. If it be true, that the earth is the appointed instrumentality, through which and by which the seeds of things grow up, it is not the less true, though it may be less obvious, that the arrangements of Providence, spread out in the wide and variegated surface of things and events, constitute, in like manner, the instrumentality, the receptive and productive medium, in which the seed of the spiritual life is to be planted, to germinate and perfect itself.

2. The analogy is not limited to the productive medium. It extends to that which is produced, and also to the manner of production. The seed, which is planted in the earth, is a dead seed. So man's soul, when it is first cast into the soil of God's providence, is a *dead* seed. They are both alike dead, the material seed and the seed of immortality.

But neither the ground of nature nor that of providence, into which they are first received, would of itself alone reproduce them to a new life. To the natural seed, when planted in the earth, there must be applied the rain and the sunshine before it can be decomposed, incorporated with new elements, and vivified with new life and beauty. The earth, operating in connection with these exterior helps, takes off and removes the outer coats of the seed, until it reaches the central principle, which had been encrusted and shut out from all the benign influences of the sun and atmosphere, and with its fostering care rears it up from its embryo of existence to its developed and beautiful perfection. In like manner, when the seed of man's immortal spirit is planted in the midst of God's providences, it is not till the influences of the Holy Spirit are applied, that it is decomposed, if we may so express it, by a separation of the good and evil, and the eternal element, deprived of life by reason of sin, is made alive in the spiritual regeneration.

The analogy in the two cases is a very close one. The encircling system of providential arrangements, operating in connection with the aiding energy of God's Spirit, removes coat after coat of that selfishness which had enveloped and paralyzed every faculty; and reaching at last the central element of the soul, the principle of love, which had suffered this dreadful perversion, it restores it to that life, light, and beauty, from which it had wickedly fallen.

3. But neither the garden of providence nor that of nature can do its work, unless the seed which is planted remain quiet in its position. If the material seed, under the pretence that a moister or drier, a richer or poorer, soil is better, or for any other reason, is removed from

place to place, the processes of nature are hindered, and re-production does not take effect. So, if the soul of man, when it is planted in the midst of God's providence, does not remain quiet under the divine operation, but, before its coats of selfishness can be displaced, moves off in its blind and dead life into what it considers a better soil, it cannot be born into the true and living life. The hand of the great Master, operating by its prescribed laws, will always perfectly accomplish its purpose, if the subject upon which it operates will remain fixed and steady to the process, but not otherwise.

4. One stroke of God's providence, perhaps by destroying a man's barn or ship, will remove the coat of inordinate desire of possession. Another stroke of the same providence, perhaps by unfolding some act of human treachery, will strike off and destroy the corrupting envelope of inordinate desire for human applause. Another blow, coming in another direction, by disappointing and destroying some lofty and cherished expectations, will separate and remove from the soul the destroying adhesions of a wicked ambition. And thus every inordinate propensity and passion may be smitten and removed one after another, until the principle of love, which had been enchained by the tyranny of lust, disenthralled from this heavy oppression, returns at last, and finds its centre in God.

5. Stay, therefore, son of man, under the process of the divine excision. Remain in the union of time and place, however painful it may be, until God shall bring thee into the union of disposition. If he smites thee, it is only that he may heal. If the dead limb is cut off, it is only that a new one may be grafted in. If, like the seed in the earth, thy spirit must be planted in the dark-

ness of the burial place, it will find an angel in the tomb, who will burst its prison house. If thou must be brought down, and crucified, and perish in the dead Adam, it is only that thou mayst be re-produced, and elevated, and made joyful in the living Jesus.

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE LAW OF PROVIDENCE IN RELATION TO SIMPLICITY OF SPIRIT.

Explanations of simplicity of spirit. — Exists in connection with a disposition to harmonize with Providence. Illustrations of the subject.— The man who is simple in spirit is a child.

THERE is a state of mind which is properly expressed by the phrase SIMPLICITY OF SPIRIT. It is a state of mind *simplified;* — that is to say, a state which is prompted in its views and actions by the *simple or single motive of God's will*, instead of being led in various directions and *multiplied*, as it were, by worldly motives, such as pride, pleasure, anger, honor, riches and the like. Being one in its controlling element, having its thought, its feeling, and its action subjected to the domination of a single principle, it cannot be multiplied. Like the law of gravitation in the natural world, it is not only one and undivided in itself, but always tends to one and the same centre.

2. Such simplicity is aided, in being carried into action, by the providential law. The *multiplied* man is full of worldly schemes. The *simple* man, being in harmony with God's will, forms no plans and enters upon no schemes, except such as are suggested by God's providences. And the consequence is, that he ceases from all those anxious forecastings and calculations, which result from a worldly spirit. As he receives what God *now gives*, and does not wish to receive anything

else; so he does what God *now requires him to do*, without wishing to do otherwise. Every day, made up of its various incidents and events, constitutes a map, on which Providence has drawn the path which he is to pursue. As each coming hour unrolls this map before his eye of faith, and before his heart of love, he promptly takes his position, step by step, without knowing at each moment where he shall be, and what he shall do, in the next moment.

3. It is obvious, therefore, that it is not possible for him to lay down future plans, or to make any such calculations, to be carried into effect at a future time, as have a fixed and absolute character. So far as he exercises what may be termed a prudent foresight, and forms plans of future action, it is always done in subjection to the developments of Providence.

The worldly man, in the independence of a worldly spirit, says he will do this or that, whatever it may be, which is most pleasing to him. He will go to some distant city, to Jerusalem, to Athens, to Rome, to London, and bring many things to pass. But the man who is possessed of a holy simplicity of spirit, true to the inscrutable law of Providence, is like *a little child.* Without excluding a prudential foresight, which is always conditional in its applications, he says, I will go to the designated place, *if the Lord wills;* or I will do this or that, *if the Lord wills.* And it cannot be doubted, if this condition of action is not always expressed, it is at least *always implied.*

4. Whatever general plans he forms, (and it ought to be added, in passing, that he is always deliberate and cautious in making such plans,) they are all subordinate to the suggestions and orders of the great providential Power. He may be said, therefore, to be a man *moved*

as he is moved upon; — not so much a man without motion, as one whose motion or action evolves itself in connection with a higher motion. His action, spontaneous and morally responsible, is nevertheless consentingly and harmoniously regulated by a higher arrangement, antecedently made. Providence is not a thing accidental, but eternal. The events which are involved in it are letters, which describe the Everlasting Will. The holy man's will, therefore, operating by its own law of action, and secured in the possession of a just moral freedom, moves in the superintendence and harmony of a higher, better, and unchangeable will.

To him the world, in all its movements, is full of God. It is a great ocean, never at rest, flowing in different directions, though always at unity with itself. And as each drop of the natural ocean, without ceasing to be a drop, flows on as a part of and in harmony with the great billows, so is he, freely leaving his will to the impulse of a higher will, moved on in harmony with the great sea of Providence.

5. Such an union with Providence not only requires simplicity of spirit, but it may be said to *make* a man simple. He thinks, as some ancient writer expresses it, "*without thinking;*" that is to say, his thoughts, taken out of the order of his once selfish nature, are suggested by and fall in with the providential order; and they do it so easily and so beautifully, like the thoughts of angel natures, that another power seems to think in them and to give them life. He thinks without the labor of thinking, because his thoughts are given to him.

He feels, as the same writer expresses it, "*without feeling.*" That is to say, he feels without making a special effort to feel, and without having his thoughts particularly directed to his feelings. They arise spontaneously in connection with actions and events.

If his spirit has become one with God's spirit, then all he has to do is to feel as God feels; — which he does by a natural sympathy rather than by a constrained voluntary effort. And so true is this, that God, operating by the gentle attractions, and by the ebbing and flowing of divine love, almost seems to take his place, and to feel for him.

He wills, it is further remarked by the writer just now referred to, "*without willing*." That is to say, his will, freed from selfish impulses, and from the power of antecedent habits, operates so harmoniously with the Universal Will, that the two wills, not physically, but morally, *are made one*. And he wills as if another willed in his stead.

6. And is not a man who thus thinks without thinking, feels without feeling, and wills without willing, by the loss of his own thoughts, feelings, and volitions, in the thoughts, affections, and purposes of God, — is not such a man truly characterized by simplicity of spirit? It is sometimes said of the truly renovated and sanctified man, that he has become a *child*. And it may well be asked, who is or can be more a child than the man we have just described? The child thinks as his father thinks, feels as his father feels, wills as his father wills. And it is this, much more than his physical likeness, which makes him the *true* child. He is sometimes taunted with that which constitutes his *true* honor, namely, that he dares not think for himself, nor feel nor will for himself, but that *he is just as his father is*. The child of God, also, is just as his Father is. It is this, more than anything else, which makes him the *true* child. And as the Father establishes, or makes Providence, the child harmonizes with Providence; and it is much the same thing to say, that he is the child of Providence, and to say that he is the child of God. In either case, he

is a child, and a child is SIMPLE; that is to say, he has that simplicity of spirit, which makes him think, feel, and will, as another thinks, feels, and wills. In his simplicity, not knowing which way to direct his steps, he goes as he is led. God leads him. From the hand of God's providence he receives his daily food. The same Providence which leads him, feeds him. All things and all events are his teachers, because God is in them. He BELIEVES, and God takes care of him.

CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE UNION OF GOD AND MAN IN PROVIDENCE.

Union with Providence is union with God. — The unsanctified or sinful man at variance with both. — Union with God in Providence implies union with God in outward nature. — Illustrations of this view. — On turning from God. — Remarks.

It will be seen, on a little examination, that the result of these views in relation to Providence must be, that harmony with Providence is union with God. As the law of Providence is only another expression for God's will, as that will is exhibited in connection with his providences, the man who lives in conformity with Providence necessarily lives in conformity with God.

2. This certainly cannot be said of the natural or unholy man. It is impossible that it should be. Living in the breath and heat of his own desires, in his own will and out of God's will, he is not more discordant with Providence, than with the Author of Providence. There is a perpetual conflict. Full of his own objects and purposes, he desires health, but God sends sickness; he desires riches, but God sends poverty; he desires ease, but God imposes activity and labor; he desires honor, but God sends degradation. Or, if God sends the objects of his desire, giving him health, wealth, and honor, he still complains of the way in which they are sent; or if he is satisfied with the way in which they are sent, he is not satisfied with the degrees. There will always be found a divergency, a want of harmony somewhere. It is impossible that they should walk together.

3. It is very different with the truly holy man, to whom God's providences are dear. In conforming to the law of Providence, he obeys the law which secures efficacy and application to every other law. The law of God, for instance, requires us to reprove sin in our neighbor; but unless we are guided in doing it by the providential law, we shall be likely to do more evil than good. If we reprove him without regard to time and place, — if we take an occasion to do it which will unnecessarily expose him to contempt and injury from others, while he is made the subject of our own reprehensions, — we shall obviously fail of our object.

The law of God requires us to do good, by speaking to impenitent persons on the subject of religion. But this requisition must be carried into effect, in connection with the law of Providence; in accordance with the appropriateness of time, place, the presence or absence of friends, and all other circumstances which are naturally or necessarily involved.

The law of God requires us to be benevolent; but benevolence, without regard to the adjustments and claims of Providence, is not benevolence, but prodigality; in other words, it is unbelieving and unacceptable wastefulness. We are to consult God's will in the *manner* of giving, as much as in the *fact* of giving. His written law requires the fact; — his providential law indicates the manner. A failure in the latter, if it is intentional, vitiates and annuls the obedience of the former.

The law of God requires us to be submissive and acquiescent under those afflictions which from time to time come upon us. But submission to afflictions, without recognizing God's providential foresight and arrangements in sending them, is mere acquiescence in unavoida-

ble events, and not acquiescence in God's wise and just agency; it is the submission of a brute animal, and not the submission of a Christian.

4. It is hardly necessary to say anything in addition to what has already been intimated in various places, to show the importance of keeping steady to the line of Providence. It is when we are in this position, and only when we are in this position, that we may be said to walk with God; and walking with God is union with God.

5. Providence, expansive as the agency of the Divine Mind, includes things as well as events, material nature as well as human action. To be in harmony, therefore, with God's Providence, we must be in harmony with everything; — not excepting the material world. It is true, that things inanimate have no life in themselves; but they are the residence of a living mind. We might almost say, in a mitigated sense of the terms, that every thing, not excluding objects the most remote from moral intelligence, becomes God to us. There is no grass, no flower, no tree, no insect, no creeping thing, no singing bird, nothing which does not bring God with it, and in such a manner that the thing which we behold becomes a clear and bright revelation of that which is invisible.

6. We go, for instance, into a garden and pluck a flower; and, as we permit our eye to wander over it, and to behold the various elements of its graceful beauty, we not only see the flower, but the eye of faith, making a telescope of the bodily eye, and reading the invisible in the visible, sees, also, the God of the flower. Often has the devout Christian, in all ages of the world, used expressions, which indicate the fact of this divine perception. "The God, whom I love," he says, "shines

upon me from these blooming leaves." And the expressions he uses convey a great truth to him, however they may fail to convey it to others. That flower is God's development. It is not only God present indirectly by a material token, by a mere manifested sign, while the reality of the thing signified is absent; but it is God present as a being, living, perceptive, and operative. We do not mean to say, that God and the flower are identical. Far from it. But what we do mean to say, is, — that the life of God lives and operates in the life of the flower. It is not enough to say, as we contemplate the flower, that God *created* it; — implying, in the remark, that, having created it, he then cast it upon the bosom of the earth to live or die, as a thing friendless and uncared for. This is the low view which unbelief takes. The vision of faith sees much further than this. God is still in it; — not virtually, but really; not merely by signs, but as the thing signified. God is the "God of the living." And while the flower lives, he, who made it, is still its vital principle just as much as when his unseen hand propelled it from its stalk; not only the author, but the support of its life, the present and not the absent source of its beauty and fragrance, still delighting in it as an object of his skill and care.

The sanctified mind realizes this in a new and higher sense; — so much so that the truly holy man enjoys especial intercourse with God, and enters into a close and divine unity with him, when he walks amid the various works which nature, or rather the God of nature, constantly presents to his view.

7. But this is not all. In a similar sense every event which takes place in God's providential government may be said *to be God to us;* — that is to say, not merely to remind us of God as coldly beholding the event at a distance, but to bring God with it, and to

manifest him in a very especial manner. I am aware that it is a common saying, and one which is generally assented to, that God is present in all events. The man of the world will assert this; — the disbelievers in the Bible will sometimes assert it. But it is hardly necessary to say, that they have not the faith which enables them to realize that which they assert. The mere declaration of his presence is a very different thing from a practical conviction, a realizing sense, of his presence. If God, in the events of his providence, afflicts me with sickness, or if he permits my neighbor to defame me, God, it is true, is not the sickness, and is not the defamation; but he is *in* the sickness and *in* the defamation, in such a sense that we are to think of him and receive him as a *present* God, and present probably for the specific purpose of trying our faith and patience. The event, painful as it is, and criminal as it is under some circumstances, is nevertheless a *manifestation of God;* and not of a God absent, but of a God present. And happy is the man that can receive this.

8. In connection with this interesting subject, one thought more remains to be considered. What is it *to turn from God?* In the earlier stages of experience, we are apt (and perhaps it is difficult to do otherwise) to assign to God a form and locality. The term *from*, in its original meaning, involves the idea of place; and regarding God as having form and locality, we easily adjust the expression to our conceptions, and speak with a degree of propriety, relatively to our view of things, of turning our thoughts and feelings *from* God. But when, in a more advanced state of experience, the idea of a local God expands itself into the idea of God "*un*-local" and infinite, not only associating himself *with* all things as an attendant, but existing *in* all things as a living spirit; — what is meant by turning *from* God then?

In the experience of a truly sanctified mind, to turn from God, in one important sense at least, is to be out of harmony with his providences. For God, in being expanded, as it were, from the local and the finite to the *un*-local and infinite, can be found, as a God developing himself within the sphere of human knowledge, only in those things, acts and events, which constitute providences. To be out of harmony with these things, acts, and events, which God in his providence has seen fit to array around us, — that is to say, not to meet them in a humble, believing, and thankful spirit, — is to turn from God. And, on the other hand, to see in them the developments of God's presence, and of the divine will, and to accept that will with all the appropriate dispositions, is to turn in the opposite direction, and to be in union with him.

9. The man who is thus united with God in his providences, not only sees God in everything else, but he has God in himself. His soul is the "temple of the Holy Ghost." The God inward, or perhaps we should say the purified soul in the likeness of God, corresponds to the God outward. God manifests himself in his providences, sometimes in sending joy and sometimes in sending sorrow; — and the life of Jesus in the heart, the God in *miniature*, if we may so express it, corresponds, with entire facility and perfection of movement, to the God that is manifested in the events and things around. And thus it is easy to understand, looking at the subject in these various points of view, and especially when we consider that God in his providences is the exact counterpart of God reëstablished in the sanctified human heart, how man may be said, in the language of Scripture, "to walk" with his Maker, and that harmony with Providence is union with the Divinity.

CHAPTER IX.

RELATION OF THE LAW OF PROVIDENCE TO THE ORDER AND DISORDER WHICH EXIST IN THE WORLD.

Results, if the law of Providence were universally fulfilled. — All would be satisfied with their situation. — There would be universal peace. — Remarks on the present state of things.

Various are the topics which this great subject suggests. One has relation to the restoration of peace on the earth.

If the law of Providence were strictly fulfilled, it is obvious that order would at once exist throughout the world. The reign of harmony, which poets have dreamed and prophets have predicted, would from that moment commence. Every man would not only be in his place, but, what is more, he would be contented with his place. It would not be the order of tyranny, but the order of benevolent wisdom. It would not be the harmony of force, but the harmony resulting from a common faith in a common Father.

2. The first development, under the strict fulfilment of the law of Providence, would be order and harmony of position. And this would be attended with harmony of feeling. As each one would be in his place, so each would be satisfied with his place, without being more satisfied with his *own* place than with that of his *neighbor*. In looking at the great frame-work of society, all would recognize the necessity of the parts to the completion and symmetry of the whole. As each would have his

place, with no rebellion of the foot against the hand, nor of the hand against the head; so there would be no feelings of distrust and envy. How could there be rivalries, how could there be distrust or envy, when each, in being contented with the divine arrangements, would of course be satisfied with that position which those arrangements had assigned him? The fact of the divine choice, especially when taken in connection with the imperfections of human wisdom, would far more than counterbalance all incidental evils; so much so, that want and suffering, attended with God's choice and favor, would be regarded as infinitely preferable to riches and pleasure without them.

3. The cessation of personal and social rivalries would involve that of nations; or, at least, the same divine law, which operated to secure the one, would not fail to bring about the other. Persons and neighborhoods would be at peace. Nations would be at peace also. There is a locality, a rank, a duty of nations, as well as of individuals. If each would take the position, and fulfil the duty, which the law of Providence indicates to them, national rivalries would cease, because the occasions of such rivalries would no longer exist; and the God of the individual man, and of the domestic hearth, and of social institutions and unions, would be the God of empires. The law of Providence, harmonizing the relations of states, as it does those of individuals and small communities, would constitute a family of nations, and war would be known no longer.

4. On the other hand, there cannot be discordance between man's moral nature and God's providence, without great contention and disorder in the world. And in point of fact, the world is in the greatest confusion and strife, because the ordainment of God is not corre-

sponded to by the wishes of the creature. With scarcely an exception, there is something left of that life of nature which produces divergence and conflict. Every one has his choice. To be a merchant, a prince, a commander of armies, a man of pleasure, a man of science, a mechanic, a farmer, a soldier, a teacher of youth, — such are some of the preferences they evince. The object at which they aim is not always, and perhaps not generally, wrong. The fault consists in unwillingness to harmonize with the decisions of a higher power. All wish to decide for themselves; all estimate the good or the evil on the small scale of their own personality and interests; all have their choice. Who among them, in the mournful degeneracy of our fallen race, wishes to follow, or thinks beforehand of following, *the choice of Providence?*

The world is a map of situations, inscribed with lines of demarcation, diversified everywhere with discriminative colors, which indicate opportunity, adaptation, want, fulfilment, duty. In one place the poor are to be aided; in another place the ignorant are to be instructed; in another the sick are to be consoled and watched over. In one place is the demarcation of endurance; in another is the arena of action; in another is the platform of authority and eloquence. But who, in beholding any one of these various demarcations and the duties it suggests, goes to God and asks: — Am I the man whom eternal wisdom has selected for this mission? Resigning my own will, I lay myself upon the altar of sacrifice, — not to be what I might choose to be, but to be what God may choose to have me to be. Send me, if thou wilt; — but let me not go, or have a thought of going, without thine own authority.

5. There are exceptions, it is true, but not enough to

reverse, or to modify essentially the assertion, that man is at war with Providence. "All seek their own," says the apostle, "not the things which are Jesus Christ's." In this state of things it is obviously impossible that there should be peace or happiness. The divine harmony is broken. Man, in being by his selfishness antagonistical to God and God's arrangements, is necessarily antagonistical to his neighbor. Place is at war with place, and feeling with feeling. Judgment is arrayed against judgment, because false and conflicting judgments necessarily grow out of the soil of perverted affections. On every side are the outcries of passion, the competitions of interest, and the crush of broken hearts.

6. Shall it always be so? The remedy, and the only remedy, is an adherence to the law of Providence. Renounce man's wisdom, and seek that of God. Subject the human to the divine. Harmonize the imperfect thoughts and purposes of the creature with the wisdom of the Eternal Will. Let the clamors of nature cease, that the still small voice of the Godhead may speak in the soul. Go where God may lead thee.

When this shall be the general disposition, when all shall cease to seek their own, and shall begin to seek the things which are Christ's, when man's life shall be again engrafted on the Universal Life, then will the Law of Providence universally take effect, and God will reign among men.

CHAPTER X.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF INTERIOR OR SPIRITUAL SOLITUDE.

"Therefore, behold I will allure her, and bring her into the *wilderness*, [that is, into the solitary place,] and speak comfortably unto her" — Hosea 2: 14.

To be alone with God, which implies being in solitude from the world, is indescribably pleasing to the devout mind. And in order to realize an idea, which carries with it so much attraction, it is not surprising, that many pious persons have, in all ages of the world, secluded themselves from society. In plucking the roses of the world, they have been pierced with the thorn; and in the depth of their sorrow they have sought to avoid that, which, under the appearance of good, conceals so much evil. Their designs have been right, but their methods have not always been successful.

We have briefly alluded to this subject in the concluding remarks of the chapter which considers Providence in connection with man's situation in life. We propose to make a few further remarks upon it here.

2. In order to have correct ideas on the subject before us, we may properly remark, in the first place, that interior or spiritual solitude is not to be confounded with physical or *personal* solitude. It is something more, and something higher, than mere seclusion of the body in some hidden or remote place.

In the accounts of those, who, in the early periods of Christianity, retired into solitary places, with the object

of perfecting their inward state in desolate caverns, in forests, and in the seclusions of monasteries, we find frequent mention of unexpected and heavy temptations. Often did the world, in the shape of evil desires and vain imaginations, follow them to their lonely retreats. It is related of St. Jerome, whose devout writings still edify the church, that, in the ardor of his young piety, he thought he could successfully escape the temptations of luxurious cities, and perfect his inward experience, by dwelling alone in the solitary deserts of Syria. In the midst of those vast plains, scorched by the burning sun, he sat down alone, emaciated, disfigured, with no companion but wild beasts. Strong were his resolutions; great were his sufferings; many were the penitential tears which he shed; — but, in the midst of this desolation and of these flowing tears, he informs us that his busy imagination placed before him the luxuries of Rome and the attractions of her thoughtless voluptuaries, and renewed the mental tortures which he hoped he had escaped.*

To be secluded, therefore, in body is not enough. To be alone in caves and in forests is not necessarily to be alone with God.

3. Nor is this all. We may properly remark, further, that true spiritual solitude, which always implies the special operations of divine grace, is not merely *mental* solitude. It is not the solitude, even when added to that of the body, of a merely disappointed and impenitent mind; of the mind *as it now is.*

The mind may become so intensely selfish that even the world cannot supply its wants. How many persons, the victims of intense avarice, of burning sensuality, of overleaping ambition, have renounced and cursed the

* See Pantheon Litteraire. Œuvres de St. Jerome.

world, because even the world, with all its adaptedness to their desires, could not give all that they asked! Men of wealth, voluptuaries, statesmen, warriors, kings, worn out with indulgence, or disappointed in their boundless aspirations, have separated themselves from society, when probably it did not occur to them *to separate from themselves*. In forests and in dens of the earth, and wherever they could flee away, and shut themselves up alone, they have poured forth, not their prayers to God, but their misanthropy and hate against man. In leaving the world behind them, they have carried in their hearts that which gave the world its evil and its sin.

4. True spiritual solitude, in being something more than solitude of the body, and something more than solitude of the unholy mind, is solitude *from that in the mind*, whatever it may be, which tends to disunite and dissociate it from God.

The soul, in the state of interior solitude, is in a state of solitude or separation from two things, in particular, namely, from its own desires and its own thoughts. IT IS SEPARATE FROM ITS OWN DESIRES. Sick of the world, if thou wouldst erect an inward oratory, and enter into the secret place of the heart, then let it be thy first purpose, as it certainly is an indispensable one, to cease from all desire, except such as God himself animates. In order to control the desires, and bring them into subjection to God, it is necessary to control the senses. The desires must have their appropriate objects; and in a multitude of cases the objects are made known by the senses. Keep a close watch, therefore, upon the senses. Let not your eye rest upon anything which is forbidden. Let not your ear listen to any corrupting or unprofitable conversation; but be as one who has no sight, and no hearing, and no touch, and no taste for anything, except

what God allows and is pleased with. Contend with all, because all have gone astray. Crucify all, because all have crucified him, who is the Eternal Life. Separate from all, so far as they have separated from God; in order that being united with them in their truth, you may be united with the God of truth.

5. The soul, in a state of spiritual solitude, is in a state of solitude or separation, also, from its *own thoughts*. By its own thoughts are meant thoughts which are *self-originated*, and have selfish ends. When all such thoughts, as well as all desires which are not from God, are extinct, the inward solitude is greatly increased.

Let it be remembered that the state of spiritual solitude does not exclude *all* thoughts from the mind; but only those which are *its own*, which are self-*originated*, and which tend, therefore, to dissociate it from God. Accordingly, it does not exclude those thoughts, to whatever subjects they may relate, of which God may properly be regarded as the author. And it is proper to say here, in order to determine what thoughts are from God and what are not, that thoughts which are from God are characterized by this mark, in particular, that they always harmonize with the arrangements of his providence. Thoughts, which arise from the instigations of self, and not from a divine movement, are not in harmony with what God in his providential arrangements would desire and choose to suggest; but, on the contrary, they busy themselves with recollections and images of persons, things, and plans, which are wholly inconsistent with such arrangements. All conceptions of persons, things, and situations, all imaginations, all thoughts, and all reasonings, which, in coming in our own will, are out of harmony with the existing providential arrangements, are not only not from God, but

they create so many disturbing influences, which separate God from the soul. The evil is inexpressibly great. In the truly holy soul, which, after many temptations and hesitancies, is fully established in the way of holiness, thoughts so discordant and out of place are not permitted to enter. It stands apart, if one may so express it, constituting an unoccupied space, a closet shut up, a still and sacred seclusion, unapproachable to everything which comes unbidden by its great Master.

6. Again, the true solitude of spirit, in the full import of the terms, may be regarded as including, to some extent at least, a cessation or solitude from words. If speech is a blessing when it is under the regulation of holy principles, it is a source of great and almost unmitigated evil when it proceeds from unsanctified passions. And when we consider how closely and extensively it is connected with such passions, we have good reason, at least in a multitude of cases, for regarding silence as a sign of moderation, truth, and peace. To say nothing but what is appropriate, to say nothing but what Christ would say, bearing reproaches without reply, and uttering the truth in love, is a virtue, which is a product of the Holy Ghost, and which belongs to him only who has been taught of God. The speech of him who is the subject of spiritual solitude, like everything else that comes within the reach of moral obligation, is under the restrictions of a divine law; and he can no more speak without God to guide him in his utterance, than he can do anything else without God. In being silent, with the exception of those occasions in which the providence of God calls him to speak, he has sundered one of the strong links, which would otherwise have bound him to what is vain, frivolous, and wicked in the world.

7. It may be added here, that solitude from words is

not solitude from communication. The soul that, in consequence of its sanctification, does not speak outward to things that are temporal, speaks inward to things that are eternal. And in proportion as it ceases from those communications with men which God does not call for and does not authorize, it increases its communications with God himself.

8. And these last remarks indicate the true result of spiritual solitude, when it is rightly understood and experienced. The soul is not left alone with *itself*, — which would be much the same as to say, that it is left alone with Satan, — but is left alone with God, who is Eternal Life. Separation, in its spiritual application, is not only seclusion, but *transition*. Separation from the world, when predicated of a being to whom absolute separation is an impossibility, is transition to God; and he who is not of the world, is of God; alone and in unison at the same time; in solitude from that which is evil, but in union with that which is good. He has hidden himself, not in the dark and weak enclosure which selfishness furnishes to those who do not believe, but in the strong fortress of the Infinite. He is not only *with* God, but *in* him; not only in harmony of action, but in the sacred enclosure of his being: — so that God may be said, in the language of Scripture, to "*compass him round about.*" No noise of unholy thoughts, no suggestions of unhallowed reason, no clamors of unsatisfied desire, no confusion of the tongues of men, nothing that is hurtful, nothing that is unprofitable, reaches him. "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people." Ps. 125: 2.

CHAPTER XI.

A TRUE CONFORMITY WITH PROVIDENCE IMPLIES THE NATURAL OPERATIONS OF AN INWARD LIFE, AND NOT MERELY THE INSTIGATIONS OR COMPULSIONS OF CONSCIENCE.

Of the central life. — Definition of it. — Use of terms in conformity with the definition. — Of the life of God. — Reference to the statements in former chapters. — Of the life of God in the soul of man. — Passages of Scripture. — A true harmony with Providence is the harmony of love and choice, and not of compulsion. — Of law in connexion with life.

In endeavoring to explain the union of the soul with God, in providence, we have repeatedly, either specifically or by implication, spoken of it as a *duty*. It is a thing required by conscience. The common forms of language, which recognize the sentiment of duty much more fully than they do a principle of holy life operating by its own nature, seemed to require these methods of expression. We think it proper to add here, however, in order to prevent misapprehensions, that union with God, in any case, on the ground of compulsion of conscience alone, does not meet and fulfil that higher view of union, which we have endeavored to explain, and which all Christians should aim to realize. It is very true, that the facts and the law of Providence constitute what may properly be called the *soul's home;* — both the place of its residence, and the place and condition of its action. But that home is to be entered and occupied by a soul which has the instinct of adaptation, the beautiful life of harmony in *itself;* and not by one, which is

harmonized with its position by the regulative power of an exterior compulsion. And as we are desirous, with the grace of God, of doing a little towards restoring and clearing up the doctrine, not merely of conversion *to* God, but of life *in* God, which is the appropriate and true result of the incipient step involved in conversion, we propose here to give a few further explanations in regard to this central life.

2. It is hardly necessary to say, that we are now speaking, not of vegetable or animal life, but of life as it exists in moral beings, — the *soul's* life. And, accordingly, life in moral beings is that central moving principle, which brings such beings into action, and which gives a direction to their action.

This definition corresponds with the views which men commonly take of human actions, and with the language which they frequently employ. Of the avaricious man, for instance, how often is it said, that his love of money is his life! Of the ambitious man, also, who toils night and day for his beloved object, we frequently say, and we say it with as much truth as frequency, that his love of power is his life. In each of these cases, and in every other modification of our fallen and selfish nature, there is always some elementary, but controlling desire, which is the inspiration of movement, the hidden impulse of activity. And it is also true, that we use the same language in cases which are very different from these. We see, for instance, a humble and devoted Christian, who prays much, and reads his Bible much, and is continually doing good; — and how natural it is to say of such an one, that *religion is his life!* A life of some kind, an elementary impulse beyond and above every other, is the necessary attribute of every moral being.

3. And if this be the case, the inquiry naturally arises here, — What is life in God? Or, in other words, what is that elementary, self-moving, and self-instigative principle in God, which constitutes the life of God? It is this inquiry, which we have already endeavored to answer and explain in the first and second chapters of Part IV. of this Work. The life of God is LOVE; — holy love; — love uncreated and eternal, because God, who is uncreated and eternal, could not exist without it; — love, without hope of reward; — love of everything which exists, simply because it does exist; — love, which is founded in the truth, and which harmonizes with justice.

4. It may be proper to recall here a passage from one of the preceding chapters, to which we have just referred. It is this: — "It cannot be too often repeated, in relation to God, that love stands as the *centre* of his being. Far more than anything else, it is the essential element of his life *as God*. It is true, it is preceded in the order of nature by *faith*. This we have already had occasion to notice. In the natural order, faith is the antecedent of love, and is, also, its necessary condition. But while it can be truly said, that both faith and love have their appropriate place, and that both are essential, it is also true, that love, considered as an element of the divine nature, stands nearer *the centre of existence*, and contains in itself the motive or active principle of being. All other things are subordinate to it. Infinite space and infinite time are its locality; infinite knowledge is its minister and handmaid; the conscience is its guard, pronouncing within and without, its moral value; the will executes its decrees; but the moving principle, the essence, the LIFE of the Infinite *as God*, that which gives inspiration to knowledge, motion to power, and impulse to the will, is, and must be, LOVE."

5 And again, if it be inquired, — What is life, (that is to say, the *true* life,) — in *man*, — the answer is the same. It is pure or holy love; and it differs from the same love in God, only in this respect, — in the one it is finite, in the other it is infinite; in the one it is derived, in the other it is eternal.

Scougall has entitled his remarkable work on the higher religious experience, — *The Life of God in the Soul of Man.* The title is *mystical*, (that is to say, it is mysterious or obscure to those who do not understand it,) but it has its meaning. The life of God is the uncreated and self-moving principle in God of *holy love.* And the life of God in the soul of man is the same principle of holy love, diffused from its eternal source, and become "localized," if we may so express it, in man's soul. In both cases, both in the infinite personality, and in the finite personality, in God and in man, it is the LIFE.

And these views help us to explain many passages of Scripture, which have an important meaning. The existence of an inward principle, both in the Son of God and in the Father, — a principle which may properly be called their *life*, — seems to be asserted in the Gospel of John, fifth chapter, 26th verse: — "For as the Father has *life in himself*, so hath he given to the Son to have life in *himself*." That is to say, there is an eternal principle of life in God, as we have endeavored to show and explain in former chapters; and that life which is in God, is communicated from him to the Son. And it may be added, that this life, which is communicated from the Father to the Son, the life of eternal purity and love, is communicated from the Son to all who are born from the death of nature into the *true* life of grace. And hence the expressions in the next

chapter: — "I am the *bread of life;*" — in other words, the living source of guidance and salvation to others; — of whom it may further be said, that they are truly guided and truly saved, only when they have the true life imparted to them. And, again, the Saviour says in another passage: — "He, that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life;" — not merely everlasting physical existence, but that ever-living and life-giving principle of holy love, which constitutes the true life. And, again, he says: — "Whosoever drinketh of the water I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water, springing up to everlasting life." God is the infinite and ever-living ocean of love; — encircling every being, and everywhere, by the necessary impulses of his nature, urging admission into the hearts that are susceptible of love. And just as soon as Christ, who is the "way and the truth," as well as the "life," opens the hearts of men by the mighty power which is in him, then God's life becomes man's life; — and the fountain which is in man is ever-living, because it is supplied from a source which is ever full. And, again, in the first chapter of the same Gospel, it is said of the Saviour: — "In Him was life, and the LIFE was the light of men." That is to say, in Him was the living and life-giving principle of unselfish benevolence, the same principle which constitutes the life of the Father; — and the manifestation of this principle was the *light*, in other words, the instruction of men. The embodying in Christ, or the "impersonation," if we may so express it, in Christ, of unselfish and perfect benevolence, could not fail to teach them their own fallen condition, by placing it in contrast with the superior excellence, which was thus revealed to them.

And expressions of this kind, though, perhaps, not very common, are entirely in accordance with the nature and facts of things. This principle of holy love is so much superior to every other, that the person or being who possesses it, is very properly called the *living* one, the one that has *life*, or even the *life itself*. There are no other expressions in the language, which meet the case so exactly. And in accordance with what has been said, we find again, in the first Epistle of John, the following expressions: — "THE LIFE was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that ETERNAL LIFE, which was with the Father, and which was manifested to us."

The opposite of this living and divine principle is death. And men, who are not in the life of holy love, by which they become united with the life of God, are said to be *dead*; — in the language of Paul to the Ephesians, — "*dead* in trespasses and sins."

6. To recur here again to the subject of a superintending Providence, we wish to say now, that the harmony with Providence, which constitutes union with God, is not the harmony of mere conviction and compulsion, but the harmony of love; — not the harmony of necessity, but the harmony of choice. In other words, having the true life in our own souls, namely, the principle of holy love, — the principle of love to God and love to man, — we must live in the midst of the divine providences, as in our natural and true home.

It may, perhaps, in a certain sense, be said of the slave, in his inability to escape from his prison and his chains, that he harmonizes with them. But he does not do it in the same sense, unless he has the same grace of God in his heart, in which Paul and Silas did, when they made their prison resound with their songs. That

central life, which consists in holy love, and not the conscience, which is merely the guard of the life, lays the foundation for unity.

We repeat, therefore, that we are to dwell in the midst of God's providences by the choice and harmonizing power of a new and loving nature; — not merely because we *ought* to be there, but because we *love* to be there; — being held in our position, not by the compulsions of an exterior force, but by the loving attraction of our own souls. Anything short of this is merely an adjustment of position forced from without, and not an union sought for and demanded from within; — the union of an arbitrary arrangement, and not the union of a harmonizing life.

7. But in saying that those who truly harmonize with Providence, do it by the impulse of a natural life rather than by law, we do not mean to say or imply, that the life either in God or man, is *life without law*. When the soul is right, by having the true life at its centre, the law is necessarily hidden in it. The holy soul is a law to itself, in a higher sense than that in which the Apostle says, "the Gentiles are a law to themselves;" — because the law is not only *proclaimed* within, but is *fulfilled* within; — is not only developed in the conscience, but, what is infinitely more, is realized in the *heart*.

When the law is thrown out of the heart by rebellion, it necessarily assumes a position in relation to the *heart* AD EXTRA. Whether proclaimed in the conscience, or still more outwardly, in the formal and published announcement, it takes a position, relatively to the central element, which may properly be described as *exterior;* — becoming, as it were, a "flaming sword," which flashes around, and threatens that interior nature from

which it has been expelled. It proclaims, it remonstrates; and in the end, if no heed is given to it, it destroys.

But in respect to the elementary principle or life of the holy soul, it may very properly be said, that the law exists, not out of it, but *in* it. In other words, the soul, in its highest or central principle of movement, is both life and law. And, what is worthy of notice, the law exists in the life, almost without being known; — a voice without utterance; — silent and peaceful, and yet powerful; — silent, because it is heard instinctively, without the formality and the noise of an announcement; — peaceful, because it is received and obeyed from the love of itself, and not from fear of its penalty; — powerful as that "still, small voice" of God, which is stronger than the wind and the earthquake. In the last days the great ocean of life shall flow into all the subordinate channels; — one nature, one principle of movement, but infinitely diversified. In those days, men, in being inwardly taught, shall everywhere have both the life and the law *in* the life; — that is to say, in that central element of holy love, that heart of hearts, without which the soul can always be justly described as DEAD. "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord. I will put my laws into their minds and write them in their *hearts;* and I will be to them a *God,* and they shall be to me a *people.*" — Heb. 8: 10.

PART SEVENTH.

UNION WITH GOD IN THE WORK OF MAN'S REDEMPTION.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE SUCCESSIVE DEVELOPMENTS OF THE PLAN OF REDEMPTION.

Of the two great periods in the history of redemption. — Outline of the first period. — Remarks on the principles of the Old Testament. — Of the second great period. — Reference to the personal history of Christ. — Those who are now in the world are called upon to be like him. — Of the efforts and tendencies of the present age. — The final struggle at hand.

Among the wonderful works of God there is none more worthy of attention, none more important in its results, both to this world and to other worlds, than that of man's redemption. Man, in the exercise of that freedom of choice which God had given him, had no sooner fallen into sin and consequent ruin, than God announced to him, though at first obscurely, the great plan of salvation. As all Adam's posterity were involved in his fall, the plan of redemption, which has a relation to the whole human race in all ages of the world, occupies a great extent of time. Beginning with the promises to Adam and the early patriarchs, which were at first obscurely, and afterwards more clearly, made, it gradually unfolds itself in successive dispensations; but at last we see it in distinctness and as a whole.

The plan of human redemption may be divided, for the purpose of more distinct views of it, into two great periods; — including some subordinate distinctions and periods, to which it is not necessary to give particular attention here.

2. The first period is that which is antecedent to the coming of Christ; — comprehending the whole interval of time from the fall of Adam to the hour of the Saviour's birth. The second period, having no conclusion which is definitely anticipated and known by men, extends from the advent of Christ to the termination, whenever it may take place, of human history.

In the first period, the only account of which is to be found in the books of the Old Testament, we have the affecting records of human sin and sorrow, interspersed with intimations of better things to come. At an early period, God, who is merciful in his judgments, selected a peculiar people, a chosen generation, to whom he made his communications, and through whom other nations and ages have been taught how widely they have wandered, and in what way they may expect to return. It is in this period that we find the histories of Noah, of Abraham, of Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, and many others, whose lives and labors are connected in various ways with the great remedial plan. It is here that we find prophecy added to prophecy; — the faint intimation uttered to the sorrowing hearts of Adam and Eve, that "the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head;" — the promise to the patriarch Abraham, that in his seed "all the nations of the earth should be blessed;" — the prophetic declaration of Jacob, "the sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come;" — the remarkable saying of God to Moses, — a saying generally

understood by commentators to have a special application to Christ, the greatest of prophets, — "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth;" — and the prophecies of Christ's coming, and of a better and more glorious period, prophecies specific in statement and sublime in imagery, which are found in the writings of Isaiah. *

3. It is here, in this first period, that we find intimations and declarations of God's abhorrence of sin; the announcement on Mount Sinai of the eternal principles of the moral law, which sin had obliterated or obscured in the human heart; and indications, some of them of terrible import, that the relations between sin and suffering are unchangeable, and that iniquity cannot go unpunished. The Tabernacle and the Temple, during successive generations, ministered in the development and inculcation of these great truths. Priests and Levites, in the performance of their allotted duties, helped to illustrate and confirm them. They had an expression in offerings and sacrifices, which declared the hopes as well as the transgressions of the world. It was by means of the bleeding sacrifices in particular that the Jews were taught, and other nations were destined to be taught through them, that "without the shedding of blood there is no remission."

The portion of human history, which is illustrated in the records of the Old Testament, is exceedingly interesting and important. The principles which are inculcated, (all those truths and principles which have relation to God, to man's spiritual nature, to sin, redemption, and holiness,) are the same as those in the New; — less distinctly revealed, but not differing in nature. The

* Gen. 3: 15; 22: 18. Deut. 18: 15, 18. Isa. 53.

New is the complement and fulfilment of the Old. And it will be found true, that the Old Testament will be valued, — its history, its poetry, its prophecies, its types, will be studied and gratefully appreciated, — just in proportion as the spirit of the New is felt and realized in the human heart.

4. The second period in the history of the great work of man's redemption may be regarded as beginning with the advent of Christ, which, in being the completion of a former order of things, was itself the commencement of a new order. This new order or dispensation of things will be completed only when the objects for which Christ came, are secured by the redemption and permanent renovation of the human race.

The events occurring in the first period were merely *preparatory;* — all of them having relation to the Saviour's coming and to those events and results which were connected with his coming. Before the Saviour's birth there had been labors and sufferings; — there had been teachings and prophecies, and ceremonies and sacrifices innumerable. And yet, they all were comparatively of no value, and had no effect, except in connection with the advent of the Son of God; much had been done preparatively, but nothing had been done effectually. It was Christ's coming which explained the import of preceding institutions and events, and which gave them their efficacy. And, therefore, until this period, it could not be said of the human race generally, nor of any *part* of the human race, "*Ye are bought with a price.*"

In the language of President Edwards, who refers, in his remarks, to the period of Christ's coming, "No part of the price was offered *till now.* But as soon as Christ was incarnate, then the purchase began immediately without any delay, and the whole time of Christ's humil-

iation, from the morning that Christ began to be incarnate, till the morning that he rose from the dead, was taken up with his purchase. And then the purchase was entirely and completely finished." *

5. But if, in the language of President Edwards, the "purchase was completely finished," it was not accepted and not even known by those for whose benefit it was made, except to a very limited extent. If the purchase was completed, the plan of salvation was not completed. It still remained necessary that those who were lost, those for whom this great work of suffering and redemption was thus brought to a close, should hear and understand the announcement of this "joyful sound." The completion of the plan of salvation required from the beginning, and does now require, that the Gospel, the good news of redemption, should be preached to every creature. In connection with what the Saviour had done, it could be said, with great and emphatic truth, that the prison doors of a fallen race were thrown open; — but those who were in the prison were so blind, and so in love with their own wretchedness, that it had become necessary to teach them their sin and their blindness, and to take them by the hand and to lead them out into the purchased liberty.

The plan of salvation, therefore, in its second period, is still in progress, and, this being the case, there still remains a great work to be done; — a work in which holy men have been engaged from the time of Christ; — a work in which they will continue to be engaged, until the last darkened mind is enlightened, the last ruined soul is saved.

6. In order to understand and feel the spirit of this new dispensation of things, in order to harmonize suc-

* Edwards' History of Redemption, Period II., part 1st.

cessfully in the prosecution of the plan of redemption as it is now in progress, it is important to be well acquainted with the personal history of Christ. Study Christ, that ye may be like him.

How affecting is the simple, yet wonderful story of the Saviour's life! Behold him, the ruler and king who had been so long predicted, making his appearance, not in the splendor of the palace, but in the humility of the manger! See him, as if the powers of darkness trembled before his infancy, carried in his mother's arms a fugitive into Egypt! Mark the early developments of his wisdom, as he converses and reasons with the learned Jewish teachers in the Temple! Appreciating the great truth of a Divine Providence, which requires the adjustment of action to circumstances, he said to John the Baptist, — "It becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." And accordingly, in his domestic relations, he fulfilled, in meekness and love, the duties of a son and brother. In relations of a more general and public nature, he conformed to the civil and religious institutions of his country; — rejoicing in what was good, and submitting to what was imperfect and evil, because the day of its destruction had not arrived. Full of divine sympathy, he went about doing good; but without the spirit of boasting, and "without observation." The appointed renovator of the world, he may be said to have restored institutions *prospectively*, by sowing great principles which were to germinate and bear fruit in the appropriate hour of Providence. He was a *man;* — but, unlike man in his fallen and depraved state, he was a man dwelt in by the Holy Ghost, who descended visibly upon him. Baptized of John in the waters of the Jordan, — teaching men with heavenly wisdom, and at the same time exemplifying in his life the principles of eternal

truth and love, — persecuted but never avenging himself, — in all situations and under all circumstances, he realizes and exemplifies the full idea of the Son of God. His last act is to die, not for himself, but for others; — "The Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

7. In the matter of union with God in the great work of the world's redemption, "*Christ is our example.*" Those who are now in the world, called upon to realize its situation, and to labor for its restoration, can be in union with God only so far as they have Christ's spirit. There is a sense in which it can be said, with great truth, that holy souls are the perpetuation of Christ. We are called upon, therefore, to be just what Christ would be if he were now living. If he were now on earth, it is certain that he would live, and labor, and suffer for the completion of that great object for which he lived and suffered so many centuries ago. In the same spirit of meekness, in the same fixedness of purpose, in the same readiness to act and to endure, he would say now, as then, "I come to do thy will."

8. It is a matter of gratitude, however obvious may be the delinquencies of Christians, that something of the true spirit of Christ still lives. This spirit has developed itself with increased truth and energy in more recent times. The remark is often made, and there seems to be a foundation for it, that the commencement of the present century was the commencement of a new and better series of ages. The closing years of the last century were signalized by the prevalence of infidelity, and by crime and violence, almost unexampled. In the extremity of those sufferings and sorrows, which were the natural result of their infidelity, men began to look to God, and to believe in him as alone able to give them help. An increase of faith naturally inspired love; and

the new series of ages has been honorably distinguished by deeds of benevolence.

It is a great and cheering truth, that the progress of the church cannot be separated from the *progress of humanity*. And probably more has been done by Christians for the elevation of the human race, during the last half century, than during any previous period of equal length, with the exception perhaps of the period denominated the apostolic age. Within the period of half a century how many benevolent institutions have been founded! How many missionaries have been sent to heathen lands! What mighty changes and improvements have taken place in administrations and forms of government! What efforts have been made to enlighten the ignorant, to relieve the poor, the oppressed, the dumb, the blind, the insane! How changed is the public sentiment in relation to war! — and how widely disseminated, compared with the state of things at any former time, is the sentiment of universal brotherhood and good-will to man!

9. These and many other favorable results have been witnessed, chiefly through the influence and exertions of Christians, and by the mighty power of the religious sentiment. Christians have done much, not only because they desired to do much, but because they *believed*. They begin to understand, more than in former periods, the mighty results of simple trust in God. It is a sentiment found in the great poet of the ancient Romans, that faith, even in the ordinary concerns of life, is power, "Possunt qui posse videntur." And if much, in accordance with this sentiment, can be done by the natural man with the aids and strength of natural faith, how much more can be done by those, who, in adding reli-

gious to natural faith, are aided by the promises and the power of God!

But what has been witnessed during the last half century is only the beginning. The mighty power of divine faith strengthens itself day by day. If to-day the man of faith can arrest the listening ear of warring nations, to-morrow he may expect to hear the last sound of their cannon. Every step that he takes gives him increased strength for effort and increased influence. If to-day he can plant his missionary stations in Africa, in China, in Syria, in the Sandwich Islands, to-morrow, by effort added to effort, and by faith added to faith, he may expect to see the foundations of the old idolatry totter, and its temples fall.

10. Engage, therefore, in the great work of man's redemption. Engage in it, not in human strength, not under the influence of human excitement, but in Christ's strength, under the leadings of the Holy Ghost, and in the fixedness and calmness of everlasting principle.

The day in which we live, if we regard either the intimations of prophecy or the signs of the times, is the day of the last struggle. Everything indicates that the powers of light and darkness are marshalling themselves for a contest greater than any which has preceded it. Humanity must rise now, or, we have reason to fear, that it will sink forever. Whatever may be the result of the struggle, there is but one course for those who would either seek or maintain their union with God, and that is, to possess the spirit of Christ, and, like him, to toil, to suffer, and to die if it be necessary, for the renovation of a fallen and suffering race.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE THREE FORMS OF REDEMPTION, PHYSICAL, MENTAL, AND SOCIAL.

Of man's primitive place of residence. — The beauty of the earth will be restored again, when man is made holy. — Of the restoration of man's physical system. — Of the restoration of the lower orders of creation. — Of mental or personal redemption. — Of social redemption.

There are three forms of redemption, physical, mental or personal, and social. When man, as the head of creation, fell into sin, it may be said, with a great degree of truth, that the physical creation fell with him. There are connections and sympathies between man and the outward or physical world, which are not well understood, and are not likely to be well understood, in the present state of things. Certain it is, however, that in a world destined to be the home of holy and happy beings, the outward will correspond to the inward, the objective to the subjective, the home to the inhabitant It is not in the nature of God, who delights in the beautiful as well as in the good, to surround a holy being with barrenness and deformity, and to compel him to take up his abode among thorns and thistles. The world was and must have been beautiful as the happy souls that dwelt in it. Originally the earth was everywhere clothed with its green and pure carpet; fruits, suitable to the support of its holy inhabitants, hung from the branches of richly laden trees, and flowers sprang

up at their feet. "Out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and that is good for food."

2. When man became a sinner his beautiful home changed its character, and became adapted to sinners. God said unto Adam, "Because thou hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it; cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also, and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee!" It is not without reason, therefore, that the poet Milton, in allusion to the consequences of Adam's fall, says:

> "*Earth* felt the wound; and nature from her seat,
> Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe
> That all was lost."

And, as if the earth were really as well as figuratively conscious of the great change which it had undergone, the Apostle says, in very remarkable language: — "For we know that the whole creation *groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now.*"*

3. When holiness is restored to man, whose fall was the cause of its being blighted, it is reasonable to suppose that fruitfulness will again return to the earth. Its beauty also, as well as its fruitfulness, will be reëstablished. Its defaced outlines will gradually be restored, and its tints retouched. There will no longer be storms and tempests. The cold of winter and the heat of summer will be tempered to that degree of heat and cold which will be best suited to the renovation of the earth, and also to man's condition and happiness. That golden age, when the air, the earth, and the waters, will all contribute to bring forth the perfect and the beautiful,—

* Romans 8: 22.

that primitive age of delights, of which we have the tradition in many nations, — will return again.

> "The swain, in barren deserts, with surprise,
> Sees lilies spring and sudden verdure rise;
> And starts, amid the thirsty wilds, to hear
> New falls of water murmuring in his ear."

4. Nor will these results be limited to outward nature. Man himself will be restored physically. Now, bowed down with many infirmities, the subject of many severe and wasting diseases, he has lost that dignity and beauty which once attached to him. As he recovers, through the grace of God, from the controlling influence of inordinate desires, his physical appetites will seek those objects which are best adapted to the wants of the physical nature; and he will use them, whatever they may be, in the proper manner. Holiness, by directing him to those things which can be rightly used, will give purification and erectness to that which sin has polluted and prostrated. And it is one of the favorable signs of the times, that the attention of men, roused at last to observe the connection between moral and physical disorder, is already so widely directed to this subject. Those who are in unity with God in their modes of living, find a restoration of health, of strength, and of physical enjoyment, such as will vindicate the goodness of God, and illustrate the import of the declaration of Scripture, that "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of *the life that now is*, and of that which is to come."*

5. And, as incidentally connected with these views, it may properly be added, that the various forms of the animal creation inferior to man will probably participate in

* 1st Timothy 4: 8.

some degree in the renovation and blessedness of that better time.

Nor is this a merely fanciful view. It has its foundation in the nature of things. Every system of things has a unity, or, what is the same thing, a correspondence and harmony of existence. All beings, for instance, which live upon the same earth, breathe the same air, and are sustained by the same heavenly Father, necessarily have ties of relationship, which are sacred and eternal. The earth is wisely and expressly fitted for the support of a great system of life, — a system which may be said, in its outward forms at least, to be elaborated from its own elements, — a system infinitely various in its manifestations, but still bearing everywhere the marks of a divine unity. Of this great system man stands at the head; but he is not on that account separate from the foot. All the inferior parts of creation may be said to embody something which finds its resultant and its completion in man. It is to him they tend; — it is in him they find their unity. They hardly have more of true adaptation of position, without man, than the inferior limbs of his own body can have life and adaptation without the head which controls them.

So long, therefore, as man kept his original position, and was fully united with God, so long he sustained relations of harmony and unity with all inferior beings; — not excepting the worm beneath his feet. These relations were disturbed by his fall. But the Gospel, which once more restores man to his proper place, will restore all which is necessarily connected with him. There is nothing in nature, either in its material or its sentient forms, which will not experience the effects of that great change, which it must be admitted is destined primarily and chiefly to raise and bless man, who is the head and

the crown of nature; so that trees, and flowers, and birds, and all living things, will have occasion to rejoice in the consequences involved in Christ's coming. In the language of the prophet Isaiah, "The mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing; and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands."* And if the trees and mountains shall clap their hands, much more will this figurative but beautiful language be true of the hunted and bleeding beast and bird which inhabit them.

6. But thus beginning at the lower and advancing to the higher, we proceed to say, that redemption is felt, and is designed to be felt, more than anywhere else, in man's fallen spirit. There is a mental, as well as a physical, redemption; and the mental or personal is as much more important than the physical, as mind holds a higher rank and is more important than matter.

The restoration of man is primarily a restoration of the affections. When man fell, his affections changed their centre; and that love, which at first centred in God, afterwards centred in himself. Being disunited from the true centre, he never afterwards could be truly united with anything, except those things which adhered to himself as their centre. In this state of separation from God, and of sin against God, he is redeemed from the penalty of sin by accepting that forgiveness which is offered through Jesus Christ.

But it is important to remember that there are two offers involved in that great work, which Christ came to accomplish; — the one is, forgiveness for the past, and the other is, a new life in God for the future. A new life in God, which implies entire reconciliation with God as its basis, could not be offered to man, until the penalty

* Isaiah 55: 12.

of the old transgression was remitted. And, on the other hand, the remission of the penalty of the past would be wholly unavailing, without the permanent restoration of a divine and living principle in man's spiritual part.

7. The great result, therefore, of the plan of redemption, when fully carried out in relation to man, is to restore him to such a position of harmony with God, that he may be said ever afterwards to live *in* and *from* God. Nothing short of this is redemption; — nothing short of this is worthy to be thought of and to be regarded as redemption.

And this great result, — a result on which depends union or separation, life or death, happiness or woe, — is made to turn upon his own free choice. It is not left to him, however, to choose a mixed or middle course. And the reason is that there is no such course. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." There can be but one true life, and that is life from God. Our heavenly Father, dwelling in man as the Divine Teacher or Comforter, must be the *whole*, the true life and the whole life in us, or he can be nothing. And this is a matter, which, as a moral agent, man is called upon to decide for himself; — namely, whether God, without dividing his influence with any other master or teacher, shall be his inward life, and thus be, in all coming time, the inspiration and source of all good. This choice is given him in Christ. If he accepts God, he lives. If he rejects him, he dies.

8. In the day of his true restoration, therefore, God once more really dwells in man. We do not say, however, that he actually enters and takes full possession *at once*. Just as soon as man gives his exiled Father permission to enter as a whole God and a God forever

he enters *effectually;* but ordinarily he enters *by degrees*, and in accordance with the usual laws and operations of the human mind. He does not break the vessel of man's spirit, nor mar its proportions, nor deface anything which is truly essential to it; but gradually enters into all parts of it, reädjusts it, removes the stains which sin had made upon it, and fills it with divine light. Man's business in this great work is a very simple one. It is to cease all resistance, and to invite the Divine Master of the mind to enter it in his own time and way. And even this last is hardly necessary. God does not wait even to be invited to come, except so far as an invitation is implied in the removal of the obstacles which had previously kept him out. Man's ceasing from all resistance, and his willingness to receive God as the all in all, and for all coming time, may be regarded as essentially the completion of the work in respect to himself; but the work of God, who is continually developing from the soul new powers and new beauties, can be completed only with the completion of eternity.

9. In connection with what has now been said, we may understand what is meant by the second form of redemption, or *mental* redemption. But this is not all that is involved in the great work of Christ. In addition to the redemption of the individual, which of course is involved in the redemption of the *mind* of the individual, there is also *social* redemption; that is to say, man is redeemed and elevated in all his relations, — not only as a man, but as the member of a family, as a neighbor, as a citizen. In all these respects, just so soon as he has become the subject of a new life, received from the great Author and Master of life, he is not merely guided by the ordinary sympathies of our nature, and the ordinary sentiments of duty, but by those sym-

pathies and sentiments as they are purified and heightened by the perfected influences of religion. As society in its various modifications is made up of individuals associated with other individuals, the redemption and elevation of the whole mass will correspond to the redemption and elevation of the individual. And man cannot become godlike by unity with God, — he cannot say with the apostle, "*Christ*," — which is an expression for the true image and power of God, — "*liveth in me*," without diffusing the image of the inward Divinity over every relation he sustains, over every association of which he is a member. And thus the families and societies of earth, under the purifying influences and power of religion, will reflect the brightness of the families and societies of heaven.

CHAPTER III.

OF UNION WITH GOD IN THE WORK OF MENTAL OR PERSONAL REDEMPTION.

References to the prophet Isaiah. — Remarks. — Of man's union with God in the work of his own restoration. — References to the prophet Malachi. — Of inward death or crucifixion. — Spiritual crucifixion followed by spiritual resurrection. — Of the soul's new life.

Concerning the ultimate effects of Christ's coming upon the material world, and upon the inferior orders of creation, effects which are incidentally connected with man's restoration, who is the head of the whole system, it is not necessary to add anything to the few remarks already made. With one or two passages, therefore, from the prophet Isaiah, we leave that view of the subject. Of the restoration of the earth, he says: "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon." * Of the animal creation, he says: "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion, and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them." †

* Isa. 35: 1, 2. † Isa. 11: 6.

2. It may undoubtedly be said of these, and other similar passages, that they are figurative. But it will be found, in the end, that the truth which they anticipate and predict will exceed the beauty of the picture, as it existed in the imagination of the prophetic poet. When the head of creation resumes his nature of holy love, the untamed and violent passions of the inferior members will become extinct. And the earth herself, as if conscious of the mighty change, will withdraw her thorns, and crown herself with roses.

3. But our great business now is with man. Whatever other things may be involved incidentally in the work of redemption, the great object of Christ's coming is the restoration of man. And pursuing the subject of the union of man with God in this new aspect, namely, in the work of redemption, the question arises here, how can man be said to be united with God in the work of his own restoration?

Various answers might be given to this inquiry. A full examination of the subject involved in the inquiry would exceed our limits. We propose, therefore, to make but few remarks upon it. Our first remark is this. Man corresponds in his position, and may be said to be united with God in the work of his personal recovery, when he willingly and firmly yields his disfigured spirit to the restoring power of the hands of the great workman. In other words, he unites with God in his own restoration, when he lets the great Master of the mind work upon him.

4. There is an illustration of the subject to be found in the prophet Malachi: "Who may abide the day of his coming?" says the prophet, "and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a *refiner's fire and like fuller's soap.* And he shall sit as a refiner and

purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, *and purge them as gold and silver*, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering of *righteousness*."

The great trouble with men is, even when they have some sense of religion, and begin to estimate its value, that they are unwilling to let the Spirit of God perform his appropriate work upon them. Sin has attached itself to the spirit's surface, like dross to the pure gold. Not more insinuating than it is adhesive, it intertwines itself with man's powers and mental exercises with indescribable strength; so much so that it is difficult to separate the good from the evil, to detach the pure from the impure. And it never can be done effectually and truly without the operations of that omniscient Spirit, which are "quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit." *

5. We coöperate, therefore, with God, in the work of personal redemption, when we submit to this divine operation without reluctance; — willing to be placed in the crucible, and to be subjected to the fiercest flames till everything evil is consumed and taken away. This is what some ancient experimental writers call *death*, that is to say, death to nature, or rather to the *corruptions* of nature. Occasionally varying the expressions they employ, they sometimes call it crucifixion or inward crucifixion. As Christ died in the body, say these writers, so we must die in the *spirit;* — as Christ was crucified and laid in the tomb, so we, in the spiritual sense, must be crucified and be laid in the tomb with him. The expressions, though they may sound singularly to some, convey a great truth, which has a permanent foundation in the principles of morals and religion. We cannot be

* Heb. 4: 12.

alli d with God without freedom from sin. To be free from sin is obviously to die to sin. And it would not be easy to die to sin, without going through that process of inward crucifixion, which is the antecedent of death.

6. But it is a great mistake to suppose, that those, who go down into the tomb by the death of their earthly or sensual life, must remain there; — as if, because they are dead to sin, they must therefore be dead to humanity. We become dead to one system of life, which is wholly evil, that we may become alive to another, which is intrinsically and wholly good. And as we coöperate with God in our crucifixion, by submitting to all the pains he inflicts; so we coöperate with him in our spiritual resurrection by voluntarily accepting the terms by which he becomes in us a new life. And the only terms which God does or can propose, are, that he shall be *All in All to the soul;* — becoming its life just as truly, though under different circumstances and in a different way, as he is the life of the material universe, — just as truly as he is the life or life-giving principle of plants and trees, and of the instincts of the lower animals. If plants and trees grow by their own law of growth, it is still true that God is in the law. If animals move by their own law of movement, it is still true that the central principle of the law of movement is a divine power. And if the holy man acts, it is still true that God acts in him. And the only difference between this case, and those which have just been mentioned, is this. God acts in the holy man in connection with, and perhaps we should say, in subordination to, his own choice.

7. Men have made a mistake in *locating*, if we may so express it, the action of man's free agency. The true action of man's moral agency is found, not in the choice of particulars, but in the choice of the *universal;* — not

in deciding upon this particular thing or that particular thing, which he cannot do with certainty on account of his limited powers, but in committing his power of choice into God's hands, and *choosing God to choose for him.*

There are different degrees of union in the work of redemption, as there are different degrees of union in other things. But in the case of the man who *fully* unites with God in the work of his personal recovery, the choice which we have just mentioned is the choice which is actually made by him, — made for the present and made for the future, made now and made *forever;* — namely, the substitution, at the present time and in all time to come, of the divine choice for his own. His choice is to let God choose for him, — to cease to lead himself, that he may be led, not in some things merely, but in all things, by the Spirit of God. He alienates himself, that he may be possessed by another; and he does it, because he has in another that degree of confidence and hope, which he does not and cannot have in himself. He ceases from his own thoughts, that God may think in him and for him; — he ceases from his own desires, that God may inspire in him true and heavenly desires; — he relinquishes his own purposes, that he may fulfil the purposes of God and of God only. He is buried a *dead Adam;* and so renewed and beautified are the features of his nature, that he may be said, in a mitigated sense of the terms, to be raised again a *living Christ.*

8. A few words of explanation should, perhaps, be offered here. A philosophical difficulty suggests itself, which it is proper to meet. How is it possible that God should become operative in this manner, in the human mind, consistently with its nature and laws? It is obvi-

ous that thought, desire and volition, are essential to man's nature, and are in fact embraced in the very idea of man. It is a matter of necessity that the human mind shall act by thinking and desiring, and in other ways, in the appropriate time of its action. All this is true. And it is equally true that all human action, when it is what it *ought* to be, is divine action. And this is always the case, (namely, human action is what it *ought* to be and becomes divine,) when the power of action, which exists in man's nature, is brought out in its appropriate issues, not by human preference, but by the decisions of *Providence.*

The difficulty is met, therefore, by a proper adjustment of the relations existing between God and man. The divine and the human are made, if we may so express it, to go together. Nothing is gained either by the exclusion of God or by the extinction of humanity. Undoubtedly man must act when the time of action comes. Action is his nature. It cannot be otherwise. But if the action is decided, not by subjective or personal preferences, not by a regard to himself, but by a regard to the *whole*, including himself, — in other words, by the divine intimations of an overruling Providence, — then it is true, that the action, which is his own, is also *God's;* and that by his own choice, which is to have no choice out of God, the thing done, which would otherwise be merely human, comes to bear the radiant stamp of divinity.

9. Without mentioning other devout men, we may properly repeat here, as being in harmony with some of the views hitherto given, the expressions of the learned and venerable John Arndt, whose name is deservedly dear to the Christian world. "If thou believest," he says, "that Christ was crucified for the sins of the

world, *thou must with him be crucified to the same.* If thou *refusest* to comply with this, thou canst not be a living member of Christ, nor be united with him by faith. If thou believest that Christ is risen from the dead, it is thy duty to *rise spiritually with him.* In a word, the birth, cross, passion, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ, *must, after a spiritual manner, be transacted in thee.*" And again he remarks in another place: — "Let us renounce wholly our own strength, our own wisdom, our own will and self-love, that, being thus resigned to God alone, we may suffer his power freely to work in us, so that nothing may, in the least, oppose the will and operations of the Lord."*

10. I am aware that this is a hard doctrine to the natural heart. It strikes heavily upon that feeling of self-confidence, which is one of the evil fruits of our fallen condition. But, as it respects myself, if I may be allowed in humility of spirit to refer to my own feelings, it is a doctrine which is inexpressibly dear to me. I have been taught for many years, and by painful experience, that I can place no confidence in my own thoughts, feelings, or purposes. In none of these respects can I be my own keeper. On the contrary, I have seen, with the greatest clearness, that to be left to myself, either in these respects or in anything else, is always to be left in sin. And so great has been my anguish of spirit, in view of my entire inability to guide myself aright, that I could only pray that I might be struck out of existence and be annihilated, or that God would return and keep that which I could not keep myself.

* Arndt's True Christianity, Vol. i., pp. 342, 355, — London edition, edited by Jaques.

IF THOU, O GOD, WILT MAKE MY SPIRIT FREE

If thou, O God, wilt make my spirit free,
Then will that darkened soul be free indeed;
I cannot break my bonds, apart from thee;
Without thy help I bow, and serve, and bleed.
Arise, O Lord, and in thy matchless strength,
Asunder rend the links my heart that bind,
And liberate, and raise, and save at length
My long enthralled and subjugated mind.
And then, with strength and beauty in her wings,
My quickened soul shall take an upward flight,
And in thy blissful presence, King of kings,
Rejoice in liberty, and life, and light,
In renovated power and conscious truth,
In faith and cheerful hope, in love and endless youth.

CHAPTER IV.

OF UNION WITH GOD IN THE WORK OF REDEMPTION IN RELATION TO OTHERS.

Man's great business, after his own recovery, to aid in recovering others. — The command of Christ to preach the Gospel. — Reference to the writings of Paul on the same subject. — Of the missionary spirit in early times. — The duty of the present age. — Of the missionary spirit as exercised at home. — Of our dependence upon the Holy Spirit. — Reference to Richard Mather.

Man's first great work is personal; and has reference to his own restoration. To renounce his separation, and to unite himself with God, is a work which cannot be postponed or made subservient to any other. Being, by God's grace, personally restored to a better state, his next business is to aid in the restoration of others. And, in doing this, the first thing is to extend the announcement of Christ's coming, and of the blessed influences connected with it; — in other words, *to preach the Gospel.*

2. The last words of our blessed Saviour, as they are recorded in the Gospel of Matthew, were these: "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; — teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

The command of the Saviour is explicit. The apos-

tle Paul inculcates the same great duty, and assigns an obvious and urgent reason for it. "Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How, then, shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!"

3. In the early periods of the Christian era, the command of the Saviour met with a prompt and believing response. The primitive Christians, filled with the spirit of their Divine Master, went abroad in all directions, and spread everywhere the news of a Saviour crucified, a Saviour risen. Laborious, and full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, they not only endured all things, but suffered all things; not hesitating to lay down their lives in support of the great truths they declared. At no time since have these efforts of the church altogether ceased; although in some periods they have not been made with the same degree of wisdom and earnestness. But while we remember the delinquencies of Christians, it is pleasing to reflect, that the followers of Christ, at the present time, under different names, but animated by the same spirit, seem to be preparing for a final and victorious conflict. It appears to be their design and hope, with the divine favor resting upon their labors, to rouse themselves at last as one man, and to carry the Gospel of the Son of God to every heathen dwelling. In this great work let every Christian coöperate, with

some proper sense of the greatness of the undertaking, and of the obligations which rest upon him. At the present eventful period, no man, who has had a fair opportunity to develop Christian principle, and to learn the weight of Christian responsibility, ought to look upon himself as a follower of Christ, unless he feels bearing in his bosom something of the spirit which animated the Johns and Pauls of primitive times.

4. "Preaching the Gospel," which we have spoken of as man's great duty after his own restoration to God, is a form of expression which may be understood in various ways. The first idea attached to it, as we find it employed in the New Testament, is announcement *abroad.* It is said of the Saviour, on a certain occasion, that he sent his disciples to preach the kingdom of God, "and they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the Gospel and healing *everywhere.*" His last command was: — "Go, therefore, and teach *all nations.*" And we know that the early Christians, after having labored a short time at Jerusalem, went abroad, as preachers of Christ's coming and kingdom, into various and distant parts of the world.

Preaching the Gospel abroad, however, does not exclude the idea of preaching it at home. The labor of those who are united with God, is not limited to the transmission of the news of salvation to distant lands. This, undoubtedly, is a great and indispensable work; but it is not the whole. He is truly a missionary of God, who communicates God's truth, and discharges God's mission of benevolence, whenever and wherever an opportunity is presented. Harlan Page, who labored at home, was as truly a preacher of the Gospel, and as truly a missionary, as the Brainerds and Martyns and other devoted men, who have preached and toiled in dis-

tant climes and among savage tribes. Always do we have the poor, the sick, the suffering, the ignorant with us. Constantly are we so situated, that a just and kind word, and even a kind look, will have its effect as a messenger of the spirit and truth of the Gospel. The ignorant are to be instructed, the suffering to be relieved, the impenitent to be awakened, the wandering to be reclaimed, the weak in faith and hope to be strengthened. There is a sense, in which every man, whatever his position in society, either is, or ought to be, a preacher of righteousness. Nor will these views be considered as unreasonable, or as destitute of foundation, when we remember that the man always preaches effectually, and cannot help doing so, who stands in the position which God's providence has assigned him; who lives the life of prayer and faith, and exhibits in speech and action that meek and benevolent spirit, which the Gospel is calculated to inspire.

5. And now we are to remember, that this great work, — namely, the bringing home the Gospel to every human soul, — is God's work; — his heart is set upon it. For this he has raised up patriarchs and prophets of other days; — for this he has employed the ministration of angels; — for this, in the fulness of time, he has sent his beloved Son. It is his purpose, by means of the Gospel, which was completed in the example and death of Christ, to raise up a people set apart for himself; — a peculiar people, — a people possessing the Christian spirit, and zealous of good works. Unchangeable in his purpose, unchangeable in his plan of operation, he can unite with those only, who are ready to unite with him. The man who is not disposed to do all that the providence of God allows him to do, in aid of this great

work, is not a co-worker with God, and is not in harmony with him.

6. Preach, therefore, by word. Preach also by action. Preach the Gospel at home, and preach it everywhere. But always remember, in connection with a deep sense of human infirmity and liability to error, to preach it under the guidance, and by the power, of the Holy Spirit. The message is from *God*, and *God* only. To be united with God in proclaiming his messages, we must speak as God gives us utterance. It is important, in this age of the world, when we hope the millennial period is rapidly approaching, to revive and to act upon the great primitive truth, that holy men speak as they are moved by the Holy Ghost; and that, so far as they are holy, they have no power of speaking otherwise.

So far as we are in union with God, while it is true that we ourselves may be said to speak, it is equally true that God speaks in us. There is but one true voice. The voice which speaks at the centre, if it embodies the truth, is the same voice which speaks at the circumference, and which speaks everywhere else. It is incapable of change. It speaks in the star, the flower, the falling leaf, the ocean's wave, in the winds, in the thunder, in the sound of the falling water, in the true philosopher, in the true poet, in the true preacher, in the Bible, everywhere the same in import, though various and differing in manifestation. When, therefore, we are in God by a true unity of spirit, we speak as God would have us speak, and by the inspiration of the Almighty.

7. And truly holy men, in all ages of the world, have known, by their inward experience, the truth of what has now been said; and they have not hesitated to proclaim what they have known. What was the language

of the ancient prophets? What was the language of Paul? Everywhere does he discard the idea that his teaching is from himself. Everywhere does he discard all confidence in human wisdom. Prophets and apostles, by their own acknowledgment, were only instruments, which gave form and locality to the divine utterance. Holy men, in all subsequent ages, have felt and spoken in the same way. The records of the interior or experimental history of the church show this to be the case. In all periods of great religious attention, and in all cases of deep religious experience, language is used by those who are the subjects of such experience, which corresponds to the fact of the divine origination of all that is true and right in the soul. The human in men may be said at such times to be kept, as it is sometimes expressed, in *abeyance;* or, what is better, to be placed under a divine and holy direction. While they are conscious of personal responsibility, it is still true that they utter what is given them. It is worthy of notice, that language, which, in religion as well as in philosophy, is an index of the mind's operations, often takes at such times the passive instead of the active form; — implying, while it does not exclude the idea of activity, especially of coöperative action, that we are also the *subjects* of action.

8. We will give a single instance, among a multitude of others, in illustration of what we mean in this remark. Among the devotedly pious men, who came to this country from England about two hundred years since, was Richard Mather, a preacher of the Gospel. With his wife and children, and many other praying people, he sailed from Bristol, in England, on the twenty-third of May, 1635. With him was another preacher by the name of Maud. Mather kept a journal. "The

twenty-fourth," he says in his journal, "being the Lord's day, the wind was strong in the morning, and the ship danced, and many of our women and some children were not well, but sea-sick, and mazy or light in their heads, and could scarce stand or go without falling, unless they took hold of something to uphold them. This day Mr. Maud *was exercised* in the forenoon, and I in the afternoon." The language is passive; — implying that while they preached *outward* to others, they themselves were preached to inwardly by the Holy Ghost; and that they could not safely give the word to others, unless it was first given to themselves.

This form of language is used throughout the book. In reference to the second Sabbath on shipboard, he says, "It being the Lord's day, there could be no going out that day. I *was exercised* in the forenoon, and Mr. Maud in the afternoon." And so everywhere, when he had occasion to speak of his preaching. He had been inwardly taught in such a manner, that he could have no idea of good and effectual preaching, except so far as the preacher was himself first *inwardly exercised;* that is to say, taught by an inward and divine inspiration. And I find this sentiment everywhere embodied in the language and the history of other holy men, who, at the same period, took their lives in their hands, and settled in the wilderness. Their strength was not in themselves. Their lives, their works, are an evidence. What a God, in-dwelling in the soul, and "*exercising* spirit," as they expressed it, in the centre of their being, could have inspired the adventurous thoughts in the minds of those praying pilgrims, and have given strength to their mighty purpose?

The most successful and favored periods in the his-

tory of all denominations of Christians, will illustrate and confirm these views.

9. It is such preaching, we doubt not, which is destined more and more to characterize the latter days. As men are gradually brought into a closer alliance with God, as with their own consent they yield themselves to be watered from the everlasting fountain, the issues from their souls will be life to others, because they will have life in themselves. As the life which they have in themselves is life from God, it is light as well as life; that is to say, it is enlightenment, or truth. The true life always expresses the truth. The truth is written upon it, just as a falsehood is written upon a false life; — and, being written there, it is read and known of all men. The man who has the true life in him, harmonizes with providence, with God, and with all true and good things. Not only his words, but his actions, are truths. Not only his daily talking *of* God and of divine things is a sermon, but his daily walking *with* God is equally a sermon. He is a preacher by divine right; "teaching like one having authority, and not as the Scribes," — not going before he is sent, but tarrying at Jerusalem, like the primitive disciples, until he is "*endued with power from on high.*"*

* Luke 24: 49.

CHAPTER V.

OF UNION WITH GOD IN THE OBSERVANCE AND THE DUTIES OF THE SABBATH.

Introductory remarks. — Objected to the observance of the Sabbath, that all days are equally holy. — Explanations of this view and answer to it. — Of the rest and peace of the Sabbath. — Of the spiritual benefits of the Sabbath. — Union with God implies union with him in the support of this day.

THOSE designs of mercy, which God entertains towards our fallen race, will be carried on, in part at least, in connection with the Christian Sabbath. And those, who coöperate and are united with God, will cheerfully recognize the day, and harmonize in its great purposes. It is not our object, however, to enter into the subject of the original establishment of the Sabbath, nor of the change of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week; nor to enter into the examination of some other topics, which are ordinarily connected with it. We introduce the subject here for the purpose of considering it in another aspect.

2. It is something worthy of notice, amongst the remarkable things of the present time, that the Christian Sabbath, contrary to what would be the natural expectation in the case, is attempted to be set aside by persons who have a respect for religion, and appear to be persons of true benevolence and piety. Some of them make

high claims to holiness of heart. The holiness of their hearts, as they understand it, has made all things holy. Their work is holy; their rest is holy; their recreations are holy; — everything they do, while the heart is holy, partakes of the character of the source or motive from which it proceeds. No one day, therefore, can be more holy to them than another. The Sabbath is on a footing with other days. All days are alike.

This is the general train of their thought and reasoning. And it cannot be doubted, I think, that there is not only a degree of plausibility, but a portion of real truth in these views.

3. It is true, in a certain sense undoubtedly, that all days, considered in reference to the subject of holiness, are alike. It would be absurd to suppose, that, while we are required to conform to holiness on one day, we are at liberty to deviate from it, in some degree, on another. It is true, therefore, that all days should be kept as holy as the Sabbath. And in this respect, and so far as this, all days are and ought to be alike.

But it ought to be particularly remembered, while we admit that the requisition of holiness attaches itself to all days alike, and that one day is not and cannot be more holy than another; that they are alike by *sameness of dispositions*, and not by *similarity of outward acts*. They are alike to us, and are made alike in God's view, not by doing the same thing every day, but by doing that which *is appropriate to the day*. *Time*, in itself considered, is not holiness, nor can it be the subject of holiness. It is not possible that one day, in itself considered, should be more holy than another; but holiness consists in being and doing *in* time just that thing *which is appropriate to the time*. The law of God requires us to do everything with a holy heart *every day*, on other

days of the week as well as on the Sabbath, and not more on the Sabbath than on other days. But this is a very different thing from doing or allowing the same thing to be done every day. The only true expression, therefore, the only true law, is, Do that which *is appropriate to the time.* Any known and deliberate violation of this law is sin; and cannot be otherwise than sin.

4. We are to do on the Sabbath day that which is appropriate to it. But it must be very obvious that the appropriateness of our acts can never be ascertained, independently of a regard to what takes place around us. The recurrence of the Sabbath, in consequence of what are understood to be the laws of God in the case, and of the general consent of all Christian nations, has the effect to stop the ordinary operations of life, and to hush the world to comparative peace; — so that there is a rest from physical labor, an opportunity to recover from undue exhaustion, and a season for moral and religious reflection and worship. It is a season, especially in the present condition of the human race, of immense, of incalculable importance. If, therefore, my recreation or my labor on the Sabbath day breaks in upon the general harmony, and disturbs the rest, the contemplations, and the worship of my neighbor, and thus does a serious injury to himself and his family, it is clearly *inappropriate to the day.* It is a violation of what is due from man to man, and is a sin.

5. Consider, further, if the Sabbath or Lord's day is the day for man to rest in, and that, in the cessation from his ordinary labors, he may receive and be nourished by the truth, it is the day also for God to work in, in order that the truth may be communicated. God has a great message for his rebellious people; the message of life through his Son. But on the other days of the week,

when their hands and their hearts are occupied with other things, it is difficult to obtain a hearing. It is on the Sabbath day, especially and emphatically, that this great message is communicated; — a message which involves in its results, not only the salvation of the soul, but equal rights among men, the emancipation of the enslaved, the cessation of war, the progress of humanity and civilization, and universal brotherhood. All other forms of legitimate emancipation are necessarily involved in the emancipation of the soul from guilt and sin. Destroy the Lord's day, and you necessarily close the communications of God, which have relation to these great objects. You close the communications, because you take away the necessary opportunities for hearing them. He, therefore, who does anything on the Sabbath, which tends to interrupt the communication between God and men, by perplexing the operations of him who speaks, or by diverting the attention of those who listen, does that which is inappropriate to the day.

6. The Sabbath is, in some respects, the great, the cheering hope of the human race. It is emphatically the day of the poor, the suffering, the enslaved, the prisoner. Without it, the poor man would scarcely have hope; laboring, as he would then be obliged to do, without cessation, and yet without additional emolument; — the slave, who experiences rest, and receives instruction on this day, would find his state of bondage more trying and distressing than ever; — the ignorant man, who greatly needs knowledge, would find many important avenues of knowledge closed to him; and the evils and sufferings which afflict our race would be, in various ways, greatly increased.

7. We may, perhaps, admit that the Sabbath, considered in its relations to the human race, was made for

the unholy rather than for the holy. That is to say, the holy man, who has a perpetual Sabbath in his soul, could, perhaps, do without it, while the unholy man could not. But then it is to be remembered, that no man can properly be regarded as a truly religious or holy person, who has not a *disposition to coöperate with God.* Our great business is, to stand in union with him, who here and everywhere unfolds our destiny. If, therefore, it is the design of God to benefit men, especially the degraded and the sinful, through the medium of the Sabbath, it is justly expected of all who regard God's will and are like him, that they will observe and honor the Sabbath day. They cannot be united with him in spirit, without being united with him in the observance of this important institution; sympathizing in its objects, fulfilling its duties, and rejoicing in the hopes it inspires.

CHAPTER VI.

OF UNION WITH GOD IN THE REDEMPTION AND SANCTIFICATION OF THE FAMILY.

Definition of home. — The home of all beings ascertained by a law of nature. — Is found in the harmony or union of two beings in one. — Reference to the law of adaptation and union in the vegetable world. — Reference to the same law in its application to the lower animals. — Of the principle of union in moral beings. — The subject illustrated from the nature of the Godhead. — View given in the Scriptures. — Remarks suggested by the subject.

We proceed now, in the natural order of these inquiries, from the individual to the family. Holiness does not annul, or even alter, the laws of nature, but only restores and perfects their action. And, accordingly, we shall be united with our heavenly Father in the great work of restoring and perfecting the family, when we endeavor to ascertain and to aid in the fulfilment of the intentions of nature.

We begin our remarks, therefore, by saying, that every being must have its *home*. By home, we do not mean simply a locality, a place of residence. The man, who is banished from his native land, and is confined to some rocky isle in the ocean, has his locality, but it is not his home. If it is so, why does he so often cast his streaming eye over the broad ocean, as if to catch the glance of some other land? Home, therefore, in being some-

thing more than simple locality, is that locality where the affections find their centre and are at rest.

2. And we may add further, that the home of every class of beings, excluding all idea of uncertainty and vagrancy, is ascertained and fixed by a law of nature. It would be unreasonable to suppose that the origin, or the position, or the physical habits, or the enjoyments, of any beings, especially in their regular or normal state, are accidental. On the contrary, all beings have their sphere or circle of life; — a sphere definite, wisely adjusted, and perfect. And this is not all. Every sphere, embracing as it does various and multiplied capacities and opportunities of action, has its *centre*. And that centre, in being constituted by a divine arrangement, and with the divine approbation, may be said to harmonize with the divine and infinite centre. And, accordingly, harmonizing as it does both with God and with the facts and incidents of its own sphere of life, it is the place, and the only place, where the highest happiness of created beings is realized. It is the place, therefore, in distinction from all others, and above all others, which constitutes their HOME.

3. That home or centre, of which we now speak, will always be found to be, — certainly in the case of all moral beings, — the harmony or union of two in one. The permanent coming together, the consolidation, if we may so speak, of two natures existing in the same sphere of life, constitutes not merely the place of meeting, but the place of affectional rest and happiness. The true domicil of all sentient and moral beings, therefore, is the domicil, the home of the heart, whenever and wherever the heart is at rest. And that place of rest is ascertained and verified by that union of two in one which has just been mentioned. And, accordingly, it

may be said of all moral and accountable beings, that they are at home and are happy in being united, first, with the divine or infinite centre, which is God; and then, in being perfectly united, under the divine direction, with other correspondent or mated beings in the same sphere of life; — a union, which may be described as the local or finite centre, namely, the centre in relation to the species or class of beings to which they belong. And until they attain this central position in their own sphere of life, a centre which corresponds to and harmonizes with the divine or infinite centre; in other words, until they reach this home of the heart's rest in love, there is always a desire which is not satisfied, always a yearning of the spirit which is not met, a deep and painful want of completed bliss.

Such is the truth of nature in this matter. Such is the truth of God, who in the book of nature has everywhere written truths which are eternal. And, accordingly, the family institution, which has so close a connection with the interests and hopes of humanity, has an everlasting basis.

4. Of this great truth we have some shadowings forth, some feeble disclosures, in the lower creation. It would hardly be out of place to say that we have an intimation of it even in the arrangements of the vegetable kingdom. The botanist is unable to develop his science without making reference to distinctions, combinations and results, which remind one of the relations of a higher state of existence. The trees and the flowers have their correspondences, their attractions. A poet of no mean name has sung the "Loves of the Plants."*

5. Still more striking and decisive are the evidences of the natural and permanent relationships of love, which

* Dr. Darwin.

are furnished by the animal kingdom. In how many tribes of animals the instinct of love seeks, with unerring perseverance, its corresponding relationships! And when those, which are fitted and are destined for each other, have established their companionship, how delightful and even affecting is their unity in labor, in suffering, and in joy! Their nest, or cavern, or excavation in the earth, becomes to them a home, hallowed by the ties of a reciprocal or correspondent nature, sustained by unchanging fidelity, and undisturbed by foreign intrusions.

Never does the bird of the mountains dwell in his distant and wild home without a companion. Wherever he goes, he cannot separate himself from the instincts of union. Another bird of the mountains sits by his side on the dark and solitary cliff, which human eye has, perhaps, never visited. They build their nest by a common labor; and their young, born from the attractions of a two-fold nature, are fed by a care which love will not permit to be divided.

6. But this principle of reciprocal adaptation, and of union founded upon it, is more fully developed and perfected in moral beings.

I take it for granted as a first and indisputable principle, that happiness must be the result of a divinely ordered and perfect constitution of things. It is true, as we have had frequent occasion to say, that love is, and must be, the *life;* that is to say, the central and moving principle of such a divine constitution. But love is not necessarily free from sorrow; — although it must be admitted, that true happiness cannot exist without love. The love, which good men have to erring and fallen sinners, is necessarily more or less mixed with grief. This being the case, the question naturally arises, - When can a truly holy or love being be said to be a happy

being; — not only happy, but enjoying happiness in the *highest degree?* This is a question, which it is obviously necessary to solve, in ascertaining the true constitution of an order of moral beings. That is to say, it is necessary to answer the question, — Under what circumstances can the highest happiness be secured to such an order of beings? And the answer, as it seems to us, is this. A moral being is happy in the highest degree, when it meets with another being, constituted on the same principles of holy love; and meets with it under such circumstances as to behold the unspeakable beauty of its own benevolent nature reflected back upon itself in the mirror of the other's loving heart. Seeing itself in another, and therefore, feeling another in itself, it not only recognizes but realizes, by the necessities of its nature, the eternal law of unity.

A love being, that is to say, a being, whose central principle of movement is holy love, cannot see its own love, because it is the nature of holy love to turn its eyes from itself, and to see the wants, and to seek the good, of another. But being unable to see itself in itself, when it sees and recognizes itself imaged forth in the bright heart and countenance of another, it seeks the company of such a being by a natural impulse, and rejoices in it "with joy unspeakable." In other words, the issues of perfect happiness are from the meetings and unions of true or pure love. It is not merely soul meeting soul; but the divine rushing into the arms of the divine. Stated in still other terms, the happiness of love consists, more than in anything else, in seeing the face of love. This is the philosophy, not more of the true joy of earth, than it is of the true joy of heaven.

7. If these views are correct, they are applicable to all moral beings. They are applicable to man; — and with

appropriate modifications which do not vitiate the principle at the bottom of them, they are applicable to angels, and to all other classes and orders of moral existences. There seems, then, to be a just and adequate foundation for the doctrine, of which we find some intimations and glimpses from time to time in experimental writers, that all holy beings have their correspondences. That is to say, they have other beings in the same rank of existence, who, in their physical, though purified and perfected, nature, in intellect and affections, and also in providential position, correspond to their own necessities, and which constitute, therefore, the completion or complement of their physical part, and of their perceptions and loves. In these different personalities, which are destined in their appropriate time to form a *completed unity*, there is the same central principle of movement or action, namely, *holy love*. Under the inspiration of this central power, they continually move from object to object, among the various objects and beings which are presented to them in their appropriate sphere of life; dispensing love to others, and receiving love in return; but, still feeling that the wants of their inward being are not fully satisfied until their equal and mated spirit, the correspondence and complement of themselves, is revealed to them. Then, under the attractions of mutual love, which is wiser and stronger than mere arbitrary and positive law, they unite together;—and they do it under such circumstances that it is not possible to separate them. They thus fulfil the purposes of their Maker; and realize in time a marriage, which, in spirit and essence, is eternal. Made and mated to each other, their thoughts flow in the same channel; the pulsation of one heart is the pulsation of the other; in the fulfilment of the divine will they become acquainted with and enjoy

the various works of God within the limits of their sphere of being; they have a common purpose, a common happiness, a common life.

8 The Godhead itself, mysterious and unsearchable as it is, is the fore-shadowing, the antetype of the family. Man is said to be created in the *divine image;* but the combined man, which constitutes the family, far more than the solitary man or woman, is the true image of God. And the reason is, "*God is love.*" And if he is so, then there must have been an *eternal Beloved.* Otherwise, he would have been the most miserable of beings. Absolute solitude is inconsistent with happiness. What could be more miserable than a being, the very essence of whose nature is love, without an object to meet and to satisfy its inalienable and mighty tendencies? And that object, to meet the ends for which it exists, must be as infinite as the love of which it is the subject. And if it must be infinite, because nothing short of infinite would be an appropriate object of the divine affections, it must also have been eternal, because otherwise the divine affection, through countless ages, would have had no object at all. And hence, there is, and must be, innate in the Godhead, the infinitely beloved, the Chosen and Anointed of the Father, the Eternal Word, the Immanuel. But this duality of existence, which is constituted into unity by the unchangeable bond of the affections, cannot be perfectly happy except in some object, possessing a like infinity of character, which may be regarded, speaking after the manner of men, as "a procession or emanation" from the two. And this re-production of itself, infinite in its nature, perfect in its love, and by "an everlasting generation," constitutes and completesthe adorable family of the Trinity.

9. Man, created in the divine image, is male and

female; and these two are one. And their united existence, deriving a new power from their union, multiplies and images itself in a third, which is also a part of itself. It is man, therefore, in his threefold nature, — the father, the mother, and the child,— the beautiful trinity of the family, and yet so constituted that in man's unfallen state it would never have suggested the idea of a weakened or discordant unity, — which may be regarded as the earthly representation, the visible, though dim, shadowing forth of the divine personalities existing in the unity of the Godhead. The original type is in the infinite; but it is reproduced and reflected with greater or less degrees of distinctness in all orders of moral beings.

10. If any, however, should suppose that these suggestions are not sufficiently based on facts and arguments, we do not wish to press them unduly upon their acceptance. Perhaps they have more weight with us, than they have with others; — and we ask no other reception for them than that to which they are justly entitled. At the same time we cannot deny our own conviction, founded upon such considerations as we have been able to give to the subject, that the family relation, as it is recognized and established in the New Testament, has its foundation in the nature of things, and is eternal. This, it will be perceived, is a very different doctrine from that which makes it a mere positive institution, founded upon arbitrary command. It will be conceded, I suppose, that God never mends his own work. His conceptions, founded upon, or rather involving, the fact of a knowledge and comparison of all possibilities of being and action, are always perfect. And, consequently, when we ascertain what his views and plans of things are, we ascertain that which is unchangeable.

The idea of the family, namely, of duality in unity,

reproducing itself in a third, which combines the image of both, is entitled, if we are correct in what has been said, to be regarded as a plan or arrangement of things which God has adopted as the best possible to be carried out and realized. And if so, it bears the stamp of divine perpetuity, as well as of divine wisdom.

11. It may be well to repeat and to keep in mind some of the leading principles, on which this conclusion is based.

One is, that every being has its two-fold centre; first, its centre or home in God; second, its centre or home relative to its sphere of life; — the one corresponding to and harmonizing with the other. Another principle is, that the life of holy or unfallen beings is, and must be, holy love. It is this principle, which brings their powers into movement, and constitutes them active beings. A third principle is, that love, in whatever beings it may exist, must have an object. Being a principle which does not turn back and rest upon itself, but which always has a tendency to move outward, it cannot exist without having an object somewhere. A fourth is, that love, by its very nature, has an attractive as well as an emanative power. That is to say, while it goes out to others, it attracts others to itself. A fifth is, that the highest happiness of holy beings, drawn towards each other as they are by the attractions of love, will be secured, and can only be secured, when they find objects perfectly correspondent to themselves. And it is only when they have experienced this completed happiness, that they have found the true centre of their created sphere of life, and are at home.

And, accordingly, it will be found, as the laws of intelligence and feeling obviously require this state of things, that to every spiritual existence in the universe,

though differently constituted and sustained in their different spheres of life, there is, and must be, a correspondent spirit. The union of these two constitutes the highest happiness; a happiness which is never experienced in this degree, antecedent to such union. And this union, which thus results in the highest happiness, is indissoluble. The moment that such beings are unveiled to each other as perfect correspondences, the mutual attraction, at once strengthened to its highest intensity, becomes irresistible; and the bond which binds them, stronger and more beautiful than clasps of gold, can never be rent asunder.

In support of these views we might refer to other sources of argument, which are frequently adduced in discussions of this nature. An argument in support of the permanency of the family, as it is constituted among Christian nations, is frequently drawn from the fact, that the sexes are equal, or nearly equal, in number. The subject has been frequently argued, also, in connection with the instinctive tendencies of our nature, both mental and physical, which so universally impel men to domestic associations. Such considerations go to confirm the views which have been taken; but they are so generally known, and so often referred to, that it is not necessary to dwell upon them here.

12. But, looking now in another direction, the Scriptures, if we rightly understand them, furnish confirmation of the general principles which have been laid down. The Bible, in the primitive records on the subject, represents that man was created in God's image. It also represents, that man and woman were one; and that woman was made from man; — the two existing henceforth in a diversity, but correspondence of form, and with an unity of life. If the passages to which we

refer, do not expressly state it, it is obvious that they naturally imply and involve the doctrine of correspondent or mated spirits, of duality in unity, to the exclusion of all affections to others which are inconsistent with such unity. There is a passage in the prophet Malachi, in reproof of the conduct of the Israelites, which throws some light upon this subject. The Israelites had become dissolute in principles and manners; — a state of things, which showed itself in violations of conjugal fidelity, and in frequent divorces. "The Lord," says the prophet, "hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously; yet she is thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. And did he not make *one?* Yet had he the residue of the Spirit. And wherefore *one?* [That is to say, wherefore did he create one only? And the answer is,] that he might seek, [that is, prepare or secure to himself,] *a godly seed.* Therefore, [he adds,] take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth."

The passage is a decided and just reproof of those frequent violations of the true idea of the marriage state, which had crept in among the Israelites. God was offended; and the prophet gives the reason of it. When God, in the beginning of things, had created man, he separated from him, in the moment of his "deep sleep," a part of his existence. And from that which he thus separated, he made the counterpart and completion of humanity in woman. He made *one.* In the language of the prophet, he had "the residue of the spirit;" and therefore he might have made a greater number. But that perfect conception which he had of a moral constitution of things, and of the elements of moral happiness, did not allow of more than one.

It was necessary, being good and perfect in himself, that he should so create man, as to evolve or develop from his existence, so long as it continued an unperverted existence, the highest possible degree of happiness. But perfect happiness cannot grow on the basis of a divided affection. It is only fulness of love, or love in the highest degree, — a state of mind which seems to be inconsistent with a multitude of objects of love, — that is crowned with fulness of bliss. And besides, that form or arrangement of the domestic constitution, which limits the central or highest affection to one, was foreseen to be most favorable, as we should naturally suppose it would be, and as the passage in Malachi implies, to the birth and training of a "godly seed." Polygamy and concubinage, and still more other systems, which propose a yet wider and more vicious liberty, are obviously inconsistent with that degree of watchful care, and religious instruction, which is necessary in training up a seed or people for God. And I think it cannot be doubted that the perpetuation of a godly seed is one of the objects involved in the constitution of a moral order of beings. Holiness, like sin, has its law of origin, and its line of descent.

13. At a later period, the language of the Saviour is this: "The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning, made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What, therefore, *God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.*

"They said unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives; *but from the beginning it was not so.*"*

14. The form of the original institution, established in infinite wisdom, was not only that of correspondent spirits, of soul formed and mated to soul, but that of permanent as well as perfect union. Those facts of mental and providential correspondence, which led to the union in the first instance, necessarily involved and established its permanency. Various expressions in the New Testament conform to and strengthen these views. Everywhere are denunciations uttered against the violation of this bond of the heart. Everywhere are encouragements uttered to the preservation of its purity, and the increase of its strength. "Husbands," says the apostle Paul, "love your wives, even as *Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.*"† These are remarkable expressions. Christ's love is perfect. Christ's love never changes. The expressions of the apostle, therefore, harmonize well with the declaration of the Saviour, that in the beginning, the husband and wife were not allowed to be separated; that the union, when made in the truth, and as it ought to be, is of God, and that no human power has authority to rend it asunder.

15. Without quoting any further from the Scriptures, we will only notice the fact, that God very frequently illustrates the strength of the love which is due to him, by references to conjugal love. He speaks of his people as espoused to him. He repeatedly calls himself their husband. Speaking, for instance, of the rebellious Isra-

* Mat. 19: 3. † Ephes. 5: 25.

elites, he says, in a certain place, "they brake my covenant, although I was an husband unto them."* And he compares their unholy wanderings from him to the conduct and the crime of a wife, who violates the marriage obligation. Such illustrations and references, if they do nothing more, may properly be regarded as showing the estimation which our heavenly Father places upon conjugal love. If they do not directly assert as much, they certainly seem to imply, that in a truly holy and perfect state of things, husbands and wives would love each other with something of that sacredness and purity of affection with which God himself is loved.

In other cases, he illustrates the relation he sustains to his creatures, by referring to the constitution of the family as it is presented to our notice in other respects. "A son," he says, in a certain place, "honoreth his father, and a servant his master. If I then be a *father*, where is mine honor?" And again it is said in another place, "As a *father* pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." And it is thus, in a multitude of instances, that the family illustrates the relations of God to man, and of man to God. And it is not surprising that references and illustrations of this kind should be so frequent. The family embodies the highest forms of truth, as well as of beauty.

It is there that we see justice, which, standing alone, would smite and destroy, tempered with mercy. It is there that we see filial love sustained and heightened by reverence. It is there, especially, that we find illustrations of the higher truths of religious experience. Where else do we find so fully exemplified the lesson of the nature and laws of pure love, as we find it in the

* Jerem. 31: 32.

family? The love which exists in the family, — the love which flows between those who, in different persons, constitute the unity of its head, — the love which flows from the parents to the children, and reciprocally from the children to the parents, — is so far divested of selfishness, even in the present injured and fallen state of things, as to give some idea, faint though it may be, of the pure love of a better world. And, in the true or holy family, that is to say, in the family where hearts are first filled with the love of God and then of each other, we may be said to have the realization of heaven, as well as the idea of it.

16. In connection with the general views which have been presented, a number of remarks remain to be made. And one is this: One of the results of the diffusion of holiness, and of the spirit of union with God, will be to recognize to every man and woman the right, not merely to a home, but to that best of all homes, the home of the heart. Much has been said, among social and political philanthropists, of the right of each man to a portion of land, a homestead; and, undoubtedly, there is a great religious, as well as social idea, at the bottom of this suggestion. But if man has a right to a home for his body, much more has he a right to a home for his soul. His soul's home is love. To love and to be loved, and in such a manner as to secure the highest happiness, is the sacred right of all moral beings; and the obstructions which exist in the present state of society to this desirable result, will gradually be removed. Such is obviously the design of Providence; and those who are united with God will aid in it.

17. Another remark is this. The union of souls in the marriage state, like everything else, ought to be under the guidance of the Spirit of God. The first work, both

of man and of woman, is the recovery of their own souls, their spiritual sanctification. Until this is done, they are not fitted, — certainly not in the full sense of the terms, — for anything else. And especially do they fail of being fitted for true mental union.

In the present state of the world, and in the imperfect condition of human things, it will often be the case, that those who are brought into the marriage state by human arrangements, and under the forms of human law, have not been united by spiritual attraction. Such marriages cannot be happy; — certainly not in the highest degree. It will be very different, in proportion as holiness advances in the world. In a purified, or millennial state of the race, the first step towards the finite marriage will be the marriage union with the Infinite. This, as we have already intimated, is the first great work of man under all circumstances; a work which cannot be superseded by any other; and without which no other can be perfectly done. When the soul is once united with God, it becomes the subject of the divine guidance; and while it loves all, and seeks the good of all, it enters into the state of perfect union only with that soul which develops most perfectly corresponding traits of character. The instinct of holiness will lead together kindred hearts; and the truth of spiritual union will take the place of the falsehood and misery of that union which merely allies the body without the union of the mind.

18. A further remark, closely connected with what has just been said, is this. If the views which have been presented are correct, one of the results of God's great work which is now going on in the world, will be, to raise and perfect woman's position and character. The darkest page in human history is that of the treat-

ment of woman. Oppressed by man's depravity, injured in her most sacred affections, — the slave of man instead of his companion, — she has bedewed the earth with tears, and has had consolation only in that faith in God, which is appropriate to her confiding nature. But when, in the progress of divine truth, it is understood that man cannot fulfil his own destiny, and is not the completion of himself without her, — in other words, when, by being restored to God, he is restored to himself, — he will also be restored to that which is a part of himself; and will thus perfect, in completed unity, what would otherwise necessarily remain in the imperfection of an undeveloped and partial nature.

And, in connection with the accomplishment of this desirable end, nothing is to be considered as unimportant which in any way tends to secure it. And this leads to the remark, that female education, considered in its religious aspects, is one of the great works of God, which will more and more characterize the coming ages. A general conviction on this subject is beginning to be felt; but it must be admitted that the way in which this conviction, and the hopes involved in it, are to be realized, is not well understood. And, accordingly, educational efforts for the improvement of the intellect are out of proportion to those which are designed for the improvement of the heart. What we need now, and what the designs of God upon our race require us to have, are seminaries, in which all necessary sciences and literatures shall be attended to, but in which it shall be understood and taught, at the same time, that the first and indispensable knowledge is that of repentance and salvation through Christ, and of sanctification by the constant indwelling and guidance of the Holy Ghost. In other words, we need seminaries in which the educa-

tion of the female heart in holiness shall take the precedence of all other forms of education.

19. A fourth remark, in connection with the views which have been presented, is this. In the progress of religion in the world, it may reasonably be expected that the power of God will be especially manifested in families. Each household, linked together by peculiar and strong ties, will constitute practically a church of God. The holy man, at the head of his family, stands forth in a special sense the representative of his heavenly Father. Such is the peculiar nature and the importance of his position, that he speaks, if he is a man of true religion, with an authority which belongs to no other. He is a *priest*, — not, indeed, by the forms of earthly ordination, — but still a priest, like Christ himself, by the inspiration of God, and after the "order of Melchisedek." It is from him and through him, if he sets a good example, and fulfils his office of teacher or priest of his household, that the child obtains, more distinctly than in any other way, his first ideas of our Father in heaven. And then add to the example and influence of the father, that of the mother, (for the father is not the completed or perfect man without the mother,) — an influence so gentle, so constant, so effective, — and it will be difficult to exaggerate the importance of the family constitution, considered in its relation to human virtue and happiness.

I am reminded, in these remarks, of a passage in the beautiful poem of the Cotter's Saturday Night: —

> "Then, kneeling down to heaven's eternal King,
> The saint, the father, and the husband prays;
> Hope springs exulting on triumphant wing,
> That *thus* they all shall meet in future days: —
> There ever bask in uncreated rays,

No more to sigh, or shed the bitter tear,
There ever hymning their Creator's praise,
In such society, yet still more dear,
While circling time moves round in an eternal sphere."

Within a few days, and since commencing the writing of these remarks, an incident has come to my knowledge, which illustrates the subject. A young man not far distant, having arrived at an age when it seemed to be proper for him to do so, left his father's house to engage in some business in another place. He was soon exposed to unforeseen temptations, and fell into great sin. He not only sinned, but became hardened and desperate in sin. His friends followed him, reasoned with him, entreated him, but all in vain. The victory of the great adversary, who had entangled him in his toils, seemed to be complete. They then made one request; — that, fixed and desperate as he was in his vicious course, he would so far yield to the common claims of humanity as to visit once more his father's house, and permit his aged parents to look upon him before they died. It was with great reluctance that he consented. As he came back, the home of his youth rose before him. The fields, where he had wandered in the delightful days of childhood, expanded in his sight; — beautiful in themselves, but, alas, how changed to him, who had lost the mirror of beauty in his own darkened heart! All received him with those unaffected tokens of benevolent interest, which are the natural language of love. There were no reproofs, no remonstrances. They understood that he came back professedly a sinner, — and a sinner by choice. And having already exhausted their efforts for his recovery, they had no courage to do or say anything more.

Accordingly, the day of his return passed away with-

out any visible signs of penitence and returning union. And yet he was a son and a brother. The bright sun went down over the hills; and the various members of the family, resting from their labors, shared in each other's society. At the usual hour in the evening, they gathered around the domestic hearth, as had ever been their custom, that they might pray together, and mingle their hearts in penitence and faith, in the presence of their Maker, before they slept. The father read the Bible, and prayed; and they sang their evening hymn. This affecting scene, that Bible which had warned and instructed his childhood, a parent's supplication, that sacred song in which brothers and sisters joined, the presence of so many beloved objects, the peace and purity of the dear and sacred heaven of home, presented in contrast with the wretchedness and sin of the scenes to which he had recently been accustomed, broke the barrier of his rebellious spirit; the tears of true penitence and love fell from his eyes; and he was rendered doubly happy by being restored, at the same time, to the centre of affections in God, and the centre of affections on earth.

20. Among other things which are suggested in connection with the general topic under consideration, it may properly be added here, that these views aid us in rightly estimating the laws of the affections. Everything has its nature. Of course, everything has its laws, not excepting the passion or affection of love.

The original, or first centre of love, is God. From this great and divine centre, it flows out and embodies itself in other centres. Love, as it exists in God, is like the ocean. The ocean is the great centre of waters. It always retains its central position; but, at the same time, it diffuses itself everywhere; — forming other sub-

ordinate centres, in plains, and on mountain tops, in fountains and in lakes, from which issue a multitude of streams and rivulets, giving life and beauty. In like manner, the great ocean of love in the Godhead empties itself into subordinate centres, which are in harmony with itself, and which, in imitation, as it were, of the great centre, and being, in fact, but continuations of the ebbings and flowings of the great central ocean, send out their waters of life to all within their sphere of movement.

The central love, then, in the sphere of human life, is in the family. From the family, where it is kept full from the great centre in the Godhead, it flows out to the neighborhood, the state, and the world. If it is full and beneficent at the source, it will be full and beneficent in its issues; and not otherwise. Truth, like beauty, always harmonizes with itself. Truth, in the centre of the affections, will always secure a right or true movement. He, who is not true to his father and mother, his wife and children, his brother and sister, being false at the centre, is not, and cannot be, true to his neighborhood, his nation, and mankind. How is it possible for him to be true in his affections, when the truth of affection is not in him? And besides, if it were possible that his love, or rather the pretence of love, could be given, it would be hardly possible that it could be received. Both the state and humanity would instinctively reject an offering which is false at the core.

21. Again, this subject throws light upon the discussions which are now held in different parts of the world on the subject of social reorganization. These discussions, which already shake society to its basis, are of immense consequence. The intellectual ability which has been brought to them is of the highest order; and it has

been sustained, in many cases, by a life of benevolence and self-sacrifice. Willing as we are to do justice to the ability, and the good motives of those who agitate these great problems, it is obviously the duty of the friends of humanity to give a careful attention to their movements, and to prevent if possible the introduction of error. We are ready to give credit for many good suggestions, which will, in due time, produce their appropriate fruits. But it has attracted the painful notice of many true friends of human progress, that propositions have been started, from time to time, which affect the existence of the family.

To build up society by the abolition of the family seems to the Christian a strange idea. This is not to reörganize and to improve society, but to destroy it. As Christians, we are bound to do everything, and, what is more, we shall love to do everything, which will tend to improve the condition, and to increase the happiness, of our fellow-men. But we cannot throw away the Bible; — we cannot violate the first principles of Christianity, especially when they are confirmed by sound reasoning, have their signatures and proofs in the affections, and are strengthened by the lessons of all history. To injure the family by bringing its claims into doubt, by diminishing its purity, or weakening its authority, is to do an injury to society in general. Law, order, the state, intellectual improvement, morals, everything, would fall with the family. And it would so, because the family is of God; and nothing which is of God can be shaken out of its position, or be lost, without causing the most disastrous results.

22. What has now been said leads to another remark, in some degree connected with it. Some persons have supposed, (we hardly know upon what grounds,) that

in the approaching and perfected period of the church, which is conveniently denominated the millennial period, the family institution, admitted by these persons to be necessary until that time, will then be dispensed with. If this view were correct, it would be of but little importance to contend against those erroneous efforts for the immediate reörganization of society, to which we have just now referred.

Perhaps the idea of the millennial extinction of the family has arisen from the imperfections, the sorrows, and the sins, which now attend it. But, it is hardly necessary to say, it is unsound reasoning, which condemns a good thing, especially if it be a great good, on account of the perversions to which it is sometimes liable. Undoubtedly the imperfections and perversions, with which the family is now surrounded, are all destined to cease in that better period; — but it seems to us, that nature, reason, and the Scriptures, all point to the conclusion, that the thing itself, the substance of the institution, will remain. Any other view would, of course, deprive the mind of a centre of love and of spiritual rest in its appropriate sphere of life; and leave it under the necessity of wandering from object to object, of gratifying momentary impulses, of seeking rest and finding none. Such a view presents to us a state of things made worse, instead of being improved; — a reduction from a higher and holier state to one less perfect; — in other words, a millennium *retrograde.*

We admit that sin has obscured the ideal of the family, as it existed and as it still exists in the mind of God. We know, very well, that the family does not now present its true aspect. But if it is true that the divine beauty of the original conception is greatly marred, it

is also true that its brightness will be restored with the extinction of the sin which has obscured it.

23. We conclude these views of this important subject with a single remark further. It seems to follow from what has been said, (and the view, we think, might be supported from other sources.) that the social principle will be sustained in full exercise in heaven. It seems to us that the law of sociality, out of which spring families and societies, is universal and eternal. It would, perhaps, not be too much to say, that the perfect development of the social principle constitutes heaven; — and that, on the other hand, perfect isolation, which is the complete or perfected result of selfishness, constitutes hell. It is a great mistake, as the matter presents itself to our apprehension, to suppose that heaven is a solitary place; and much more that it is so spiritualized as to be a mere abstraction, — a place without locality, an existence without form, a form without beauty. Heaven has far more substance in it, than such shadowy conceptions would seem to imply. Heaven is not the extinction of existence, nor the mere shadow of existence, but a higher and purer state of existence; the growth and perfection of that, of which we have the obscure idea in the present life.

And, accordingly, reasoning from the identity of truth, which is the same above as it is below, we cannot hesitate in saying, that love is the life of heaven, as it is of earth. And such is the nature of love, that it must have objects there, as it has here. It must have its laws there, as it has here. It must have its great centre and also its subordinate centres there, as it has here. It must fulfil its own ends and grow up into society there, as it does here. To be in heaven, and not to be in the exercise of love, is a contradiction. Angels have their loves;

— and heaven, if they were not allowed o exercise their benevolent affections there, and to group themselves together in bright clusters, in accordance with the constitutive and eternal laws of moral beings, would cease to be heaven to them, and would become a place of sorrow. And it is one of the consolations which God allows us in the present state, in being permitted to believe that the wants of the heart here will be met and solaced hereafter; — that those suffering, but holy, ones, who have been smitten and robbed in the rights of the affections here, will find kindred spirits, (celestial stars, as it were, reflecting their own brightness,) who will meet and embrace them, and will wipe away their tears at the threshold of the New Jerusalem.

CHAPTER VII.

OF UNION WITH GOD IN THE WORK OF CIVIL AND NATIONAL REDEMPTION.

The consideration of the family naturally followed by that of society in general. — Of the two forms of society, namely, Internal and External. — Internal society the same with civil society. — External the same with international society. — Civil or internal society can be perfected only in proportion as God becomes the lawgiver of it. — Of the law of nations. — Defects in this law. — Its ultimate improvement and perfection. — Reference to the philanthropist, William Ladd. — Extract from a speech of Emile de Girardin.

It may, perhaps, be thought, that too much time has been occupied in the consideration of the family. Such a suggestion would not be likely to be made on a full examination of all the facts in the case. The truth is, that the family, considered in the various aspects in which it presents itself, — its origin, its history, its perversions, its ennobling joys, its mighty influences, the necessity of protecting it, its gradual perfection, — might well occupy a volume, instead of a few pages. It is a subject, whether we consider its intrinsic nature or the peculiar exigencies of the times, which is worthy of the most extended and able examination which can be given it. The true principles of the family, as well as the practice appropriate to them, its perpetuity as well as its high nature in other respects, ought to be well understood. In all these particulars, undoubtedly, an important work

is to be done. And God, intent upon the restoration of mankind to their original purity, has already begun it.

Accordingly, it is one part of God's great work, in the progress of redemption, to write the law of the family in all its parts still more deeply upon the human soul; and also to carry out this divine law practically by reconciling man and woman first to God, and then to each other, by reëstablishing marriage upon high religious principles, so that God shall no longer be excluded from that which ought to be especially his own work, and "by turning the heart of the fathers to the children, and of the children to their fathers, lest he come and smite the earth with a curse." * It is with these words that he closes the Old Testament; — a passage, which indicates what is involved in, and what is expected from, the New. If even now there is no name so sacred as that of home, it is destined, in the purifications of Christianity, to be surrounded with still happier associations. The cloud, which has so long overshadowed it, shall be lifted from the domestic hearth. The bitter tear, which has so long fallen in secret, shall no longer be shed. There shall be light instead of darkness, and songs for mourning.

With the few practical suggestions which have been made in the preceding chapter, we leave it to individuals to decide in what way, among the many methods of coöperation which present themselves, they shall labor in the advancement of this important object. And, accordingly, we proceed now to other parts of God's great work of redemption, in which, all who have Christ's spirit, and who sympathize with their heavenly Father as he did, are called upon to unite.

2. Next in order after the society of the family, the

* Malachi 4: 5.

subject of human society, in its more general forms, naturally presents itself. In proportion as the influences of Christianity are more generally and fully felt, there will be a gradual restoration of human society in all its aspects; — so that, while we cannot always foresee what precise form it will take, we may say, in general terms, that it will be made to harmonize perfectly with the principles of the Gospel.

But in order fully to understand the subject now before us, it is proper to remark, that society may be contemplated in two respects, namely, as Internal or External. Society, in its internal form, is society considered as consisting of men, who live within the limits of the same commonwealth, and under the same laws. So that society, regarded in its internal aspect, is the same thing with civil society. Society in its external form is society considered as consisting in the union of commonwealths with other commonwealths in the great society of nations. As the first may be called civil society, because it is the society of citizen united with citizen under the authority of the state; so the latter may be denominated international society, because it is the society of nation united with nation under the authority of the law of nations.

3. Civil society, or society as it exists between man and man united together in the state, is very imperfect. It is true that the great law of progress, which insures the ultimate triumph of good over evil, has reached and beneficially affected the combined man of the state, as well as the man of the family, and the man individual. Men in various ages of the world, Solon, Lycurgus, Numa, among the legislators of antiquity, and other wise and benevolent men of later times, have endeavored to improve civil society; and their efforts have not been

without success. But, after all that has been done, it is still attended with gro t imperfection.

The imperfection of human society is the necessary result of the imperfection of those human laws which give it shape and sustain it. Human laws are imperfect for the simple reason, (at least it is not necessary to mention other reasons,) that the human mind, which is the maker of human law, is not omniscient. Law is, or ought to be, the expression of perfect right. Consequently, there is and can be but one perfect lawgiver, namely, God himself. Man, by the very fact of his creation and dependence, is properly the *subject* of law, and not the author of law. It is one of the remarks of Hooker, the distinguished author of the work entitled "Ecclesiastical Polity," that the "seat of law is in the bosom of God." Consequently, if views and remarks of this kind are justly entitled to consideration, human law will be perfected, and human society, so far as it is sustained by law, will be perfected, just in proportion as the God of the universe descends and takes possession, and becomes the God of the human mind. When that is the case, law will be the expression of right; and it will not be more just and right in itself, than it will be just and right in its individual applications.

4. It could hardly be expected, that, in suggestions necessarily so brief as these, we should undertake to indicate the nature or the degree of the social improvements that are destined sooner or later to be made. To one topic, however, it may be proper to refer in one or two remarks. In all times past, society, (with some exceptions undoubtedly, but comparatively few,) has treated those who have offended against it, on the principles of strict justice, — returning "blow for blow, and stripe for stripe." One of the results of the greater prevalence of

the Gospel spirit will be, to mingle mercy with justice, and to save and bless the criminal, at the same time that all necessary measures are taken for the protection of society. Within a few years, benevolent men, in different parts of the world, have directed their attention to this important subject. They have not been ashamed to have it understood that they have felt a deep interest in the situation of their erring and lost brethren, who have violated the rights of the state, — remembering that they themselves also are sinners. In the true spirit, as it seems to me, of our blessed Saviour, who would not and did not "break the bruised reed," they have gone to the prisoner; they have taken him by the hand; they have fed him, clothed him, instructed him. And while they have pressed upon him the necessity of repentance for sins committed, they have held up, at the same time, the joyous hope of sins *forgiven*.

The result of the prevalence of this truly Gospel spirit will be gradually to modify the systems of civil and criminal jurisprudence. Love, founded upon faith, and never at variance with justice, will be recognized as a regulating principle in the conduct of the social body, as it is and ought to be in the conduct of the individual. Society, having faith in God, and in itself as an instrument of God, will no longer crush the criminal whom it holds in its grasp; but will show its confidence in its mighty strength, by mourning for those whom it condemns, and by gently leading them back to truth, to duty, and to happiness.

5. But society has its external, as well as its internal, form. Society, existing in the external form, is the society of nation united with nation. If society is not perfected in itself, that is to say, in its civil or internal form, still less is it perfected in its external relations. Each

nation, existing as a corporate civil association, stands in a great degree by itself; recognizing but very imperfectly that bond of international brotherhood, which should bind together nation with nation. One of its first principles is its relative independence; that is to say, while it recognizes in the general sense the principle of union, it claims the right of judging of its own interests, and of deciding for itself in all cases. Consequently, there are frequent collisions. Massive and giant-like in its strength, but, like the sightless Polyphemus of the Grecian poet, nation, blinded by passion, dashes against its fellow-nation; and both are broken by the concussion, and are covered with blood.

6. It is painful, to the pure and fully christianized mind, to read the history of nations. We need no argument to establish the doctrine of the fallen condition of the human race, in addition to that of its history. Beginning with Herodotus and the other Greek historians of that period, and reading the records of mankind in the pages of eminent writers of different ages and countries, what do we find but a series of sorrows and crimes, arising out of the struggles of national interest, and the antagonisms of national passion? In how many battle-fields has human right contested with human power, and strength gained the victory over justice! It is not without reason, therefore, that Cowper, whose beautiful poems have the merit of being infused with a Christian spirit, feelingly exclaimed,

> "Oh for a lodge in some vast wilderness,
> Some boundless contiguity of shade,
> Where rumor of oppression and deceit,
> Of unsuccessful or successful war,
> Might never reach me more!"

It is the part of Christianity, in the fulfilment of the great plan of redemption, to put an end to this state of things. Christ's work on earth is not accomplished, and of course the work of his followers is not accomplished, so long as wars exist. Let it, therefore, be the language of every Christian heart, — language which shall find its issues in appropriate action, — that wars shall exist no longer.

7. And in this, as in other things, we have grounds for encouragement and hope. The Gospel is like the little leaven, which leaveneth the whole lump; always operating and always certain of securing its object, but not in a manner which attracts much notice. Operating in this gradual manner, the Christian religion has modified and improved the doctrines of international law. The principles which regulate the intercourse of nations, are different, in some important respects, from what they were a few centuries ago. And the difference shows the secret operation and influence of a religious sentiment.

For instance, it was once a recognized principle in the laws of nations, that, if a merchant vessel were wrecked on a foreign coast, the wreck became the property of the occupants of the coast, although the real owners were living. It was an established principle also, not less unjust, that, if a person, resident in a foreign country, died there, his property, instead of descending to those whom he designed and wished to be his heirs, should be taken for the use and benefit of the country where he happened to be resident at the time of his death. It was also originally one of the laws of war, which make a part of the existing laws of nations, that the prisoners taken in the progress of a contest might be put to death. The conqueror was regarded as possessing complete power over the captured; so that he could take away their

lives, if we supposed their death would turn to more account than their preservation. But, in these and in a number of other respects, the code of nations has been very much improved. A more benevolent spirit now pervades it. But still, it must be admitted, that it is far from being what it should be.

8. Now, it may not be the duty of all Christians to labor directly for the improvement of the code of nations, because Providence may not give to all the power and the opportunity to do so; but it belongs to Christianity, — it is a part of the results of the Christian system, — not only to improve, but to perfect it. Christianity, operating from the centre to the circumference, contemplates universal advancement. It raises all, — and raises all at the same time; — not only the individual, but the family, the state, and the whole world as it is united together by the international code.

Every man, therefore, who fully possesses the Christian spirit, and whom Providence permits to labor in that direction, will bear his part in this great work. His relations to God are such that he will necessarily contribute that mite or talent, whatever it may be, which is appropriate to his personal ability, and his position in the social arrangement. His first work is to perfect his own nature; or rather, to let God do it, by leaving himself in the hands of the divine operator. But in being perfected in himself, he is perfected at the same time in the relations he sustains to others. In being a better man, he is not only a better father and husband, but a better citizen; — and while he labors and prays for the new and perfected life of those immediately around him, he does what he can for the restoration of all others in all places.

9. Think not that nothing can be done, because thou art little in the eyes of the world. The result does not

depend upon what thou art in the world, but upon what thou art in God. It is God only, who is the source of all good. Various are the instruments he employs. He selects them, and he places them in the appropriate situations to be used by him. The power, whether it be more or less, is not in the instrument, in itself considered, but in God, who selects and locates it. In a multitude of instances has the declaration of the apostle been illustrated, that "God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty." * A man of faith and prayer, however humble his situation in life, may yet have influence enough to affect the destiny of nations.

I will refer to an instance, which seems to be appropriate in this connection, and will illustrate what has now been said. Some years since, I was acquainted with an individual who has now gone to his rest and his reward. I have reference to the late William Ladd, the mention of whose name will recall cherished recollections to many hearts. In early life, he followed the sea; — in the course of a few years he became the commander of a merchant vessel, and acquired some amount of property. On quitting the sea, he purchased a farm in the inland town of Minot, in the state of Maine. On reading a tract on peace, written by one of the former presidents of Bowdoin College, he was led to reflect upon the inconsistency of war with the Gospel. Having enjoyed favorable opportunities of education before going to sea, and being a person of a strong mind, he conceived the idea of putting an end to war throughout the world by means of a Congress of Nations which should have power to establish an international code, and also a High

* 1 Corinthians 1 27.

Court of Nations. What a mighty project to be brought about by such limited agency!

A few years before his death, I visited his retired residence. He showed me the room in which he had written the numerous papers, and even volumes, on the subject of war. Walking with him in one of his beautiful fields, he pointed to a small cluster of trees at a little distance, and said, "It was beneath those trees that I solemnly consecrated myself in prayer to this one work of impressing upon the minds of men the principles of peace." For many years he spent a large portion of his time in going from city to city, and from town to town, in almost all parts of the United States, introducing the subject of peace to associations of ministers, conversing with all classes of persons in relation to it, and lecturing wherever he could find an audience. I met with him often, and have been deeply affected with his simplicity and fixedness of purpose. He fully believed that God had inspired within him that central idea, around which the labors of his life turned. And those who knew him intimately, could hardly fail to be impressed with a similar conviction. He corresponded with distinguished individuals in Europe; — he scattered his numerous tracts and other writings on this momentous subject in all parts of the world. For many years the important movements of the American Peace Society appeared to rest upon him far more than upon any other individual. He died; and although he was preceded and has been followed by others of a kindred spirit, he was the means, under God, of giving an impulse to the cause of peace, which is felt throughout the world. Society, penetrated by the great thought of universal pacification, seems to be brought to a pause. At Brussels, at Paris, at Frankfort-on-the-Maine, at London, we see nations, as it were,

assembled in great Congresses, and consulting on their position and duties, in consequence of the impulse which God was pleased to communicate, in a great degree, through the labors of this comparatively humble individual. Let us not, then, look upon the outward person or the outward situation. It is one of the attributes of God to deduce great results from small causes. Wherever there is faith in God, there is power, — whatever may be the situation of the person who exercises it.

10. In this, as well as in other parts of this work, we are desirous not to forget the great object had in view, namely, the illustration of man's position, relations, and principles of action, *in the higher forms of religious experience.* It is taken for granted, that the subject of this higher experience has passed through the more common forms of religious experience; and has advanced from the incipient state of justification, and from the earlier gradations or steps of sanctification, to that state of DIVINE UNION, in which he can say with a good degree of confidence, "I and my Father are one." With this remark kept in view, we proceed to say here, that man, in the early periods of his religious history, is generally moved in the sphere which is appropriate to a renovated nature, in part by the principle of holy love, and in part also, — and often in the greater part, — by the *constraints* of the moral sense. The distinction between these two principles of action we have already endeavored to illustrate at the eighth chapter of Part IV. At a later period of his inward history, if he is the subject of all that the Gospel is designed to realize in him, the principle of holy love will be so increased in strength as to be the constant and predominant principle of action. And, although at this later period (the period with which this work is principally occupied) the moral sense is greatly

enlightened, and is increasingly sensitive to distinctions of right and wrong, still, if the principle of love is supreme, the presence and operations of the moral susceptibility will not much be felt in the compulsive form, but chiefly in the instruction it gives, — that is to say, in its indications of that "straight and narrow" path into which holy love leads, and also in the constant manifestations of its approbation. In other words, the Christian, at this later period, will be brought more fully and permanently into the true life of love.

11. What, therefore, we wish to add here, is this. Those, who are truly and fully united with God, will be found to harmonize with him in the great work of redemption, in the various forms of it to which we have attended, and in all other forms, by the natural workings of the central principle or *life*, and not by anything which is merely incidental or additional to the life. If they are in God by an unity of life, then the life of God and the life of those who are thus born of God, can always be said, in whatever their heavenly Father calls them to do, *to be one*. And, consequently, living with a divine life, and the life being the "*light*" as well as the life, (that is to say, being under God the true and most important interpreter of the divine will,) they cannot possibly be separated from him in that great work of redemption which is so dear to him.

12. In coöperating in the great work of redemption, the truly holy man will preach, for instance, not merely or chiefly to fulfil the requisitions of conscience, which tells him what he *ought* to be, — but having already become what he ought to be by the power of the Holy Ghost in his soul, he preaches in fulfilment of the requisitions of the life, which is now actually in him. He will relieve the poor and sick, and do other works of benevolence, not for the purpose of stifling the feelings

of remorse, but in the natural and self-moved fulfilment of the instigations of a renovated nature. Like the Son of God, in whose image he is born, he "*hath life in himself.*" In the language of the apostle Paul, the "love of Christ constraineth" him.

13. It may be said of such a man, with a good deal of reason, that he realizes, in the operations and relations of his spiritual nature, the truth of the vision of Ezekiel. It was not without a spiritual meaning that the prophet, on the banks of the Chebar, saw a vision of "wheels in the middle of a wheel," all moving with the same principle of life. In like manner, the holy man, being in God by the possession of a divine nature, constitutes a life within a life, "a wheel within a wheel;" — living and acting in that true and beautiful position, which the finite, when not dislodged from its original adjustment, always sustains in the Infinite. Without being in the same form or personality of existence, he possesses, by unity of spirit, the same central element of existence. And whenever and wherever God moves in the great work of redemption, — whether it be to relieve the sick and to enlighten the ignorant at home, or to pour light into the dark minds of the heathen abroad, or in whatever other work of benevolence, — he can neither be out of harmony with the divine mind, nor cease to be coöperative in the divine plans of action.

THE CAMP HAS HAD ITS DAY OF SONG.*

The camp has had its day of song;
The sword, the bayonet, the plume
Have crowded out of rhyme too long
The plough, the anvil, and the loom!

O, not upon our tented fields
Are Freedom's heroes bred alone;
The training of the work-shop yields
More heroes true than War has known!

Who drives the bolt, who shades the steel,
May, with a heart as valiant, smite,
As he, who sees a foeman reel
In blood before his blow of might!
The skill that conquers space and time,
That graces life, that lightens toil,
May spring from courage more sublime
Than that which makes a realm its spoil

Let Labor, then, look up and see,
His craft no pith of honor lacks;
The soldier's rifle yet shall be
Less honored than the woodman's axe!
Let Art his own appointment prize,
Nor deem that gold or outward height
Can compensate the worth that lies
In tastes that breed their own delight.

And may the time draw nearer still
When men this sacred truth shall heed
That from the thought and from the will
Must all that raises man proceed!
Though pride should hold our calling low
For us shall duty make it good;
And we from truth to truth shall go,
Till life and death are understood.

* Ode composed for the Charitable Mechanic Association of Massachusetts, by E. Sargent, Esq.

CHAPTER VIII.

IN UNION WITH GOD IN THE REDEMPTION OF THE ARTS AND LITERATURE.

Of the necessity of a divine guidance in art and literature. — Of the early opinions among men on this subject. — Of union with God in the mechanic and other subordinate arts. — Of union with God in the fine arts. — Illustrated from the paintings of Raphael. — The subject pursued in its relations to history and poetry. — Its application to seminaries of learning. — Reference to a pious teacher. — Concluding Remarks.

If God is man's great teacher, as we have seen in a former part of this work, then, in his efforts in acquiring knowledge, he will be likely to go astray and to seek out hurtful "inventions," * so far as he does not accept a divine guidance. It is, therefore, not too much to say, that the Holy Ghost, the inward teacher sent down from heaven, both ought to be, and that he is designed to be, the great master in art and literature. And it is worthy of notice, that heathen nations, who everywhere give evidence that they have some glimpses of the truth, agree in ascribing the early inventions in art, and the early works in poetry and music, either to a divine agency or to human agency aided by divine. According to the mythology of the Greeks, it required the skill of Mercury to invent the lyre; — and there could neither be poetry nor music without the aid of Apollo and the

* Ecclesiastes 7: 29.

muses. Accordingly, the great poets of the Greeks and Romans frequently begin their works by a distinct recognition of their dependence upon a higher power, who gave inspiration to their thoughts. And it is worthy of notice that Livy, in the commencement of his work on Roman history, (certainly in many of its attributes one of the most perfect and interesting works of that kind,) proposes to his readers, that they should imitate the custom of the poets, and commence their undertaking by supplicating the presence and aid of the gods.

2. But it is needless to recapitulate instances. The idea that a higher power was needed in the development of all good things, was so universal in the early periods of the human race, that it might well be called an instinct of man's nature. The ideas which men then entertained of God, were oftentimes very imperfect, and perhaps generally so; but, whatever they might conceive him to be, they had a conviction, which was entitled to higher and better practical results, that he was the true source of all good. Mr. Dryden has alluded to this early conviction in some happy lines: —

"When Jubal struck the chorded shell,
His listening brethren stood around,
And wondering, on their faces fell,
To worship that celestial sound.
Less than a God they thought there could not dwell
Within the hollow of that shell,
Which spoke so sweetly and so well."

3. Readily, and with entire strength of conviction, do we yield our assent to the great truth, which is thus imperfectly indicated in benighted times and by the dim light of nature, while it is clearly asserted and illustrated in the Scriptures. All poetry, all music, all painting, all

statuary and architecture, all wisdom in legislation, all useful mechanic invention, everything whatever, which has in it the elements of living truth and beauty, implies the fact, as it seems to us, of the presence and aid of a divine power. At any rate, so far as these things, or things of a kindred nature, are done or attempted to be done without divine aid, so far they are attended with imperfection. And so far as they are imperfect, and could be carried into effect otherwise and better than they are, so far they stand in need of redemption; — a redemption, which comes to them through the mediation of Jesus Christ, as truly as redemption comes in any other form from that source.

Believing, therefore, that the work of redemption and restoration extends to all things, and that no art or work of man can be carried to its highest and most beneficial results without God's presence, we proceed now to illustrate the union of God with man in the redemption and perfection of the arts and literature.

And, in doing this, we shall first refer briefly to those arts which, though very useful and necessary, are generally regarded as comparatively low in rank. Our view is, that the divine presence and aid are necessary in the development and application of all such arts, however humble they may be thought to be. The art of agriculture, the mechanic arts, the arts connected with domestic life, all of them not only admit, but require, the union of the divine with the human, in order to secure their perfection and their proper use. We do not hesitate to say, that the man who holds the plough, the man who lifts his arm of toil in the workshop, can do it usefully and happily, only so far as he does it in connection with God. The true doctrine is, — God in *all things*. God made the earth; — God sends the rains, that fertilize it. But

this is not all. It is equally true, whenever and wherever the original harmony of things is reädjusted, that God guides the hand that guides the plough, and smites in the hand that smites the anvil. And the laborer and the artisan are not in true union with God, until they have dispositions which will lead them to pray and to believe that this may be the case.

4. And especially may this be said, because all arts and labors have relationships and influences beyond what is first presented to our notice. It is obvious, for instance, that God designs that the Gospel shall be preached in all lands. And this great and benevolent design as obviously involves the fact, that missionaries must be sent just as far and as widely as the Gospel is to be preached. And every one perceives that they cannot thus go from land to land, and over intermediate seas, without the aid of ships and other conveyances. Those, therefore, who build ships, and those who navigate them, and those who develop and perfect the principles and methods of navigation, are all in the natural line of divine coöperation; that is to say, — they are doing a sort of work which God designs and wishes them to do. And if they will only add the spirit of union to the form of union, then they are actually in the state of union, so far as this particular thing is concerned, and will do just what they ought to do. And without the spirit of union, which leads them to look to God in everything, they will fail to do what they ought to do. God, dwelling in the soul, is just as necessary to make a good sailor as to make a good preacher.

God not only needs missionaries, who are to be sent abroad in ships; but he needs Bibles to be distributed by those missionaries. But Bibles must be printed; and they cannot be printed without printers to do the work.

Printers, therefore, are as necessary in their sphere as missionaries. And the remark which has just been made, may be repeated here, namely, that the presence of God in the soul is as necessary for printers, in order to help them do their work properly, as it is for others. And this is true of every art and calling whatever. No art ever comes to its ultimate and highest good, and never can come to such good, except so far as it has God in it, both to approve the thing done, and to direct and aid in doing it.

5. And this we understand to be the doctrine of the Bible everywhere. When Moses was required to build the tabernacle in the wilderness, it was necessary that he should employ mechanics. But the fact of their being mechanics did not exclude the idea of their being taught of God. On the contrary, God seemed to be unwilling that any should be employed except those in whom his own spirit of wisdom dwelt. He did not propose to do the work miraculously; — but, in using human instrumentality, he was desirous of finding men of such dispositions that he could enter into them; and working *unitively*, if we may so express it, perfect the human thought by harmonizing it with the divine. The passage in relation to this matter is one of great and beautiful interest.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, — See, I have called by name Bezaleel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah.

"And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship; — to devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in cutting of stones to set them, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship.

"And I, behold, I have given with him Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan: — and in the hearts of all that are wise-hearted I have put wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded thee." *

The following striking stanzas of George Herbert, an old English poet, now almost forgotten, illustrate and sustain some of the views which have now been expressed.

TEACH ME, MY GOD AND KING.

Teach me, my God and King,
In all things Thee to see,
And what I do in anything
To do it unto Thee.

Not rudely, as a beast,
To run into an action;
But still to make Thee prepossest,
And give it thy perfection.

A man, that looks on glass,
On it may stay his eye,
Or, if he pleaseth, through it pass,
And then the heaven espy.

All may of Thee partake,
Nothing can be so mean,
That with this tincture, — FOR THY SAKE,
Will not grow bright and clean.

A servant, with this clause,
Makes drudgery divine;
Who sweeps a room, as for thy laws,
Makes *that*, and the *action*, fine.

This is the famous stone
That turneth all to gold;
For that which God doth touch and own
Cannot for less be told.

* Exodus 31: 1—6; also, 36: 1—4.

6. These views will apply easily, and perhaps still more strikingly, to the liberal or fine arts, and to the various forms of literature. If a divine guidance is necessary to make a man perfect in the more common arts of life, so that he cannot build his own habitation, or do any other mechanic work as he ought to do, without God to help him, — still more is such guidance necessary in those arts which imply higher exercises of the intellect, such as painting and sculpture. Give a man all the requisites of a great painter, a practised hand, an eye alive to all the beauties of external nature, a creative imagination; — and then add a heart in alliance with God, and rich in holy feelings, and it is not easy to limit the beautiful and sublime works which his pencil will give rise to. The same may be said of sculpture and of architecture in its higher forms.

And such are the difficulties attending these arts, when it is proposed to carry them to their highest results, — so much invention is necessary, so much care in the relative adjustment of the parts which a happy invention has given rise to, so much wisdom and skill in conveying inward thought and feeling by outward form and gesture, —not to speak of other difficulties and other requisites, — that all great artists, if they sympathize with their own aspirations, and are true to the instincts of their own nature, feel very much their need of a higher power to guide them. They know that nothing but God could carry out and complete the outlines of beauty and grandeur, which often float vividly before them; — and, under the pressure of this conviction, their souls instinctively yearn for the possession of that divine presence and aid, which would enable them to complete what their imaginations have conceived.

The subject of one of the great paintings of Raphael is

"Paul preaching at Athens." The conception of the apostle as the living embodiment of a new and purer religion, his position in the front and on the steps of a heathen temple, the mighty power of truth and Christian benevolence which struggles forth in his dignified but fervent attitude and action, the different groups that stand or are seated around him; — some calmly indifferent and sceptical; — some expressing in their countenances the mingled feelings of fear and hatred; — others yielding a rational conviction, and showing the signs of true sensibility and rising hope; — all combined together present a scene of the greatest conceivable interest. How is it possible that a great painter, who appreciates the magnitude of such a work, the exceeding difficulties attending its execution, and the mighty moral influences which follow a successful result, can enter upon it, without first praying to God for wisdom and help, and without continuing to pray for them at every successive step?

7. Literature also will fail to arrive at and to sustain itself in its perfected life and beauty without the spirit of God in it. Take, for instance, the single department of history, which is undoubtedly one of great importance and interest. The importance of history is seen, when we consider that the history of the deeds and sufferings of man is at the same time the history of the dealings of God with man. It details the conflicts of virtue and vice, and anticipates, in the conclusion of its pages, the destruction of the one, and the final victory of the other. There is a close connection between human history and the coming of Christ in the world; — as the incidents in the history of all nations, previous to that event, seem to have been arranged in reference to it, and all subsequent history has been influenced by it And, in this point of view, many judicious persons have been disposed, with

much reason, to set a high value upon the work of President Edwards, entitled "The History of Redemption." The object of this interesting work is, to give an outline of the history of the human race, in connection with the history of redemption; — uniting the two in such a manner as to show their reciprocal relations and influences. And the history is exceedingly valuable, not because it illustrates the idea of history in all respects, but because it so fully introduces an element, or point of view, which is generally left out.

As a general thing, history has limited itself to giving an account of national wars. It has been so written, for the most part, as to be a commemoration of deeds of violence, so that he, who kills the most and conquers the most, however deficient in civic and moral virtues, holds the prominent position, and is made the subject of undue panegyric. But history, in order to be a true record of the human race, should embrace not only war, but also civil and political events, and the progress of the arts and literature; — so that the man, who serves his country by peaceful labors and excellences, may have his reward, as well as the warrior.

A favorable change, however, has already taken place. The spirit of the Gospel is beginning to take effect. The rights, the happiness, the immortal interests of the masses of men are receiving a consideration which they have not received before. And history at last sees the wisdom of placing the man who has made improvements in some useful art, or has done some benevolent deed, on a footing at least with those who command armies. And so far as the historian, looking to God and receiving direction from that source, has an eye to the good of mankind and the claims and advancement of virtue, he

is in union with God. And this is at the same time his highest honor, and the source of his highest power.

8. The doctrine of divine union applies to everytl ing. We may, perhaps, further illustrate it, in its connection with literature, by some references to poetry as well as history. Without stopping to say what poetry is, or on what principles it operates, every one knows that its influence has been very great. But it is to be regretted, that, like history, it has been employed, for the most part, in immortalizing deeds of cruelty, and in giving lustre to crime. Or, if it should be said in modification of this statement, that it has given a larger share of its attention to love than history has, it ought to be added that the love which it celebrates has not always been that refined and pure love, which receives the sanction of Christianity.

It is a matter of great satisfaction, however, that a change is beginning to take place in this department of literature, as well as in others. The eclat of war, although it has yet a strong hold upon fallen humanity, is much diminished; and domestic affections, regulated and refined by religious sentiment, are more highly appreciated, as compared with irregular and sinful desires. Rural and domestic life and other subjects, such as are congenial with the truths of nature, and with the spirit of the Gospel, are beginning to find hearts that can estimate, and pens that can develop, them. The man who writes a poem after the manner and in the spirit of the Eclogues and Georgics of Virgil, or, taking more recent examples, in the spirit of the Seasons of Thomson and the Task of Cowper, in which the beauties of nature and the humble virtues of agricultural life are celebrated, does a great work for God and humanity. The Scotch poet, Burns, has sung both of war and love; and few

persons have touched with a stronger hand those mighty passions; but the time is coming, when the gentler and purer virtues, which are celebrated in his beautiful poem, entitled "The Cotter's Saturday Night," will excite a wider and deeper interest.

9. Poetry has done much for vice. The day has come when it is expected to do much for virtue. This is not an art in which it is safe for a man to separate himself from God. Let it be employed in showing the deformities of wickedness and the excellences of goodness; in depicting the beauties of nature, and in describing the attributes of the God of nature; and in encouraging men to walk in the paths of truth and peace.

Among other things, it ought not to be forgotten that poetry has its religious uses. If angels sung at the birth of the Saviour, certainly there is more reason that men should sing. The author of a good hymn, expressive of sentiments of Christian piety, may feel that he has lived and labored to some purpose. In enumerating those who through divine grace have done a good and great work for God and his church, we should not be likely to forget the names of Watts, Cowper, and Wesley. How many thousands of hearts, in successive ages, have been cheered by the simple but impressive stanzas, the author of which I believe is unknown, which begin with the lines: —

> "Jerusalem! my happy home!
> Name ever dear to me."

But whatever a person undertakes to write of this kind, whether hymns or poetry which is more secular in its character, it is very certain that he can do nothing well, without God to help him. If the ancients needed

the aid of Apollo and the muses, it would be a shame to a Christian poet to attempt to write without the aid of that divine inspiration which Christianity teaches him to supplicate. And, accordingly, Milton was unwilling to proceed in his great work, the Paradise Lost, without first invoking the divine assistance: —

> "And chiefly Thou, O Spirit! that dost prefer
> Before all temples the upright heart and pure,
> *Instruct me*, for Thou knowest."

10. It is hardly necessary to say, that this subject has an intimate connection with the establishment of institutions for the education of the young. It is a part of God's plan to teach man by the aid of his fellow-man, and to secure his coöperation by means of educational institutions. And looking at such institutions in this light, namely, in their relation to God, it seems to us that the time has come when they should be formed upon new principles, — in part at least. Christians will not do justice to themselves, and will not fully unite in God's designs in reference to man's redemption, until the learned institutions they establish and support shall combine with the cultivation of the intellect the higher and nobler object of the restoration of the heart to its Maker. It should be written upon the walls of every seminary; — Education for Truth, for Humanity, for God.

The state of things is far different from this. If we had no other evidence of this remark, we might find it in one fact which all are acquainted with. We have reference to the general exclusion of the Bible from the list of books which are systematically and thoroughly studied. If the Bible were estimated by its literary merits alone, it ought not to be condemned to such an

exclusion. Considered simply as documents, which throw light upon the origin of the human race and the early history of mankind, there are no books more worthy of being studied than the five books of Moses and the other historical books of the Old Testament. We would not easily yield to others in our admiration of the writers of Greece and Rome; but, looking at them in a merely literary point of view, we find the poets of those countries excelled by the Psalms of David and by many passages of the prophets;—and probably no one will say, that the moral doctrines of Socrates and Cicero, eminent and enlightened men as they were, are to be brought into comparison with the divine teachings of the Son of God. But on such a subject we might be distrustful of our own opinions, were it not that they are in harmony with sentiments frequently expressed by literary men of so much learning and eminence, that their right to judge in such a matter will not be likely to be questioned. The subject, for instance, is repeatedly referred to in the writings of Sir William Jones. He says, on one occasion, "I have carefully and regularly perused the Holy Scriptures, and am of opinion, that, independent of its divine origin, the volume contains more sublimity, purer morality, more important history, and finer strains of eloquence, than can be collected from any other book, in whatever language it may have been written."

But if the Scriptures are thus valuable in a merely literary point of view, it would be difficult to express their importance, considered in their moral and religious relations. It is in this view that they present claims, which can be brought forward in support of no other system and no other book.

11. The mere study of the Bible, however, is not enough. There are institutions at the present day, in

which the Bible is carefully studied; — but less with a reference to moral than intellectual culture. The study of the Bible for the mere purpose of increasing our amount of knowledge, is not all that is needed. It should be studied with a view to the supply of our moral and religious wants. There should, therefore, be a distinct recognition, in every institution of learning, of man's alienation from God, and of the necessity of his restoration. Upon these two great subjects, which are vital in every true system of mental culture, all possible light should be thrown. And it ought to be understood that no person is to be regarded as thoroughly educated, who cannot say that he has given his heart to God at the same time that he has given his intellect to the pursuit of the truth.

Nor are such views to be considered as impracticable. There are principles, perhaps not yet fully ascertained, which will result, (we will not say infallibly, but certainly as a general thing,) in spiritual renovation. And it seems to be a part of God's plan, that they shall be applied in connection with the relationship of man with man, and their mutual agency one upon the other. In all institutions, therefore, there should be living teachers, men "full of the Holy Ghost," who should be able to explain and apply the principles which are found in the Bible. If such institutions could take the place of many which now exist, the favorable results to morals and religion would be immense.

12. In early life I had the privilege of being associated, for a short time, in an institution, where it seemed to me that some of these views were happily illustrated. The studies always opened in the morning and closed at night with religious services. The first half hour of every morning, in particular, was devoted to the reading of the

Scriptures, the explanatory and practical remarks of the worthy and learned instructor, and to prayer. And it was understood by all, whatever might be the state of their own minds, that this religious exercise was regarded by the teacher as one of preëminent importance. When he came before his pupils on this occasion, they did not doubt that he had first commended them to God in private; and that of all objects which he desired and had at heart, there was none so dear to him as their souls' salvation. Every movement was stilled; — every voice hushed; — every eye fixed. And whatever might be their creed or want of creed, their religious adhesions or aversions, such was their sympathy with his obvious sense of responsibility and his divine sincerity, that even the hearts of the infidel and the profane were cheerfully laid open before him; — so that with their own consent he was enabled, by means of his prayers and warnings, to write upon them, as it were, inscriptions for immortality. I was not a pupil in the seminary to which I refer, but an assistant teacher; and had a good opportunity to observe and to judge. My own heart never failed to be profoundly affected; — and, from what I have learned and known of his pupils since, scattered as they have been in all parts of the world, and engaged in various occupations, I have no doubt that God eminently blessed the faithful labors of this good man, and that he was permitted to realize in his instructions, to an extent not often witnessed, the beautiful union of the culture of the heart with that of the understanding.

13. Christ came into the world to redeem man to God; — in other words, to restore him to God by redemption; — that is to say, by the purchase of his own blood. The object is secured, and man is restored to God, whenever God becomes the in-dwelling, the universal, and

permanent principle of his soul. And the restoration of man involves the restoration of all that pertains to man. The restoration of man is, at the same time, the restoration of the family and of civil society; the restoration of art and literature. It implies the extinction of vice, the prevalence of virtue, the dignity of labor, the universality of education, and the perfection of social sympathy and intercourse. And no man is, or can be redeemed, in the truer and higher sense of the terms, without being, in his appropriate degree and place, a co-worker with God in all these respects.

CHAPTER IX.

ON THE NATURE AND PRACTICAL EXTENT OF THE POWER OF LOVE.

The influence of love attractive rather than aggressive. — Argued, first, from the fact that pure love has an innate power of making itself loved. — Foundations of this power, namely, in its truth and beauty. — Illustration of its influence from the influence of the sun in the natural world. — The man of love is a man of power.

In coöperating with our heavenly Father in the great work of redemption, it is an interesting inquiry, what spirit, what form of feeling, he will especially lead us to exercise, and what methods of action and effort we shall employ. It is an obvious remark, though somewhat general in its nature, that we should never lose our simplicity of heart; — but, looking to God with "a single eye," should receive all things and be all things in him, alone. Leaving ourselves in the hands of God in simplicity, that we may thus become the subjects of compel divine operation, he, more or less gradually, according is to his infinite wisdom, infuses into the soul that divine ment of holy love, which makes it like himself. God is love. The feeling, which exists in those who coöperate with him, is love. And when the world becomes holy by being the subject of holy love, and just in proportion as it becomes so, it will find its *power* in its love. And, accordingly, its influence over men will partake of the

attractive rather than the aggressive form. This is an important idea, which we propose to illustrate.

2. In support of the view which has just been proposed, we proceed, therefore, to say, that pure or unselfish love has a power, beyond anything else, to make *itself loved.* This remarkable power is as permanent as its own existence. As its attributes of universality and purity, its dispositions to love *all*, and to love all *without selfishness*, are essential to its nature; so, also, is the attribute of its influence, that secret but certain power of making itself beloved, which it has over all minds. It is not a power, therefore, which is acquired, but *inherent;* not incidental, but *permanent;* exerting its authority by virtue of its own right, and not merely as the gift of favorable circumstances.

3. Pure love necessarily makes itself beloved, because it involves in its own nature two things, which have a power over love, namely, Truth and Beauty.

Pure love is in the truth; — that is to say, it exists in accordance with the truth. In other words, it has a true or right foundation. If God is a true or right being, then pure love, which constitutes the central element of his character, is a right or true affection. Love, which seeks the good of others merely because it delights in goodness, and without any private or selfish views, is what it ought to be; — and it cannot be otherwise than so without a violation of the facts and order of the universe. True in its foundation, and true in all the relations it sustains, it is, at the same time, truth to God, truth to nature, and truth to humanity.

4. And pure love, which is thus inscribed everywhere with the signatures of its divine verity, is as beautiful as it is true. Beauty is the daughter of truth. When things are in truth, they are where it is fitting and right,

that they should be;—just in their facts, just in their relations, just in their influences —and such things cannot be indifferent to us. They have an innate power which is real, though not always explainable. And not being indifferent, but having a natural power to excite emotions, it is not possible, with such a foundation and such relations, that they should excite any emotions but those of beauty. We regard it, therefore, as a fixed and permanent law of nature, that the true and the beautiful have an eternal relation. It is impossible to separate them. Wherever the truth is, standing out to the eye in its own free and noble lineaments, there is, and must be, beauty.

5. With such elements involved in its very existence, pure or holy love cannot fail to make itself beloved. While its nature is to go out of itself for the good of others, and its very life is to live in the happiness of others, such is the transcendent truth and beauty of its divine generosity, that, without thinking of itself, it makes itself the centre of the affections of others. In its gently pervading and attractive nature, it finds the analogy and the representation of its influence in the natural world. The sun, as the centre of the solar system, binds together the planets which revolve around it, because it has something in itself, which may be said to allure and attract their movements, rather than compel it. What the sun is to the natural world, pure love is to the moral world. It not only has life in itself, which necessarily sends out or *gives* love, but has an innate power in itself, which necessarily *attracts* love. Receptive, at the same time that it is emanative, it stands as the moral centre, which, without violating their freedom, turns the universe of hearts to itself.

6. The man, therefore, who is inspired and moved by

the sentiments of pure or holy love, is a man of *power.* The maxim, that knowledge is power, is not more true than the proposition, that love is power. Limited in knowledge, and weak perhaps in social position, the man who loves is powerful by *character.* His mere opinions, divested as they necessarily are of the perversions of selfishness, inspire more confidence than the proofs and arguments of other men. His wish becomes a law, and has far more influence with those around him than the arts and compulsions, which a spirit less pure and generous would be likely to apply. Power is lodged in him, lives in him, moves in him, goes out from him. It costs him no effort. It is felt, almost without being exercised.

When he is smitten he turns the other cheek, and like the Saviour, forgives and loves his enemies. And, in doing so, he conquers by the grandeur of his sentiments. He does good from the impulse of good, and without asking or seeking reward. And, in doing so, he places himself above the common level of humanity;—disarms enmity, commands friendship, controls sensibility. The world stands abashed in his presence; and does him homage. He realizes, in the spiritual sense of its terms, which is far more important than the temporal, the fulfilment of the declaration of the Saviour, "Give, and it shall be given unto you. Good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom."

7. It may, undoubtedly, be admitted, that those who have not arrived at this high degree and purity of love, nevertheless have influence. But their influence, whether we regard it as more or less considerable, is *aggressive,* rather than *attractive.* It compels, rather than draws. By arguments in support of revelation, by appeals addressed to their interest and fears, by social and pruden-

tial arrangements, they aim to bring others within the currents of religion, and coerce them, as it were, to come in. They are much at work, developing plans and prudences of action, mining and countermining with the highest dexterity of moral and religious strategy, sometimes with considerable effect, and sometimes, like the apostle Peter and his associates, toiling all night and catching nothing.

But to the man whose heart is filled with divine love, his life is his strategy; his heart is his argument; and the Holy Ghost within him is his prudential consideration. The less his strategy, and the more his simplicity, provided his simplicity is founded on purity and faith, the greater will be his power. He can no more separate power from himself, or himself from power, than he can separate himself from existence.

8. Love, therefore, is the principle operating by its own divinity, and attractive in its influence rather than aggressive and compulsive, which is destined not only to control, but to renovate the world. It will conquer, it is true, on a new system, and by means of new principles; but its conquest will be none the less effectual. And it is in such doctrines as these, which imply and require the renovation of the heart in love, that the Christian is destined to find the true and mighty secret of millennial power.

9. One of the characteristics of holy love, in its developed and operative forms is, that it naturally and necessarily adapts itself to the existing state of things. Feelingly alive to every possible variety of circumstance, it assumes, at successive times, an infinity of modifications, without failing, under any of them, to maintain its own simplicity and truth. Its own nature, which harmonizes with the true good of all other natures, requires this.

When it is alone, for instance, and its thoughts are allowed to revert to God in distinction from the creatures of God, sympathizing with the divine excellence and blessedness, it naturally takes the form of adoring communion and praise. It begins to sing. "Bless the Lord," it says with the Psalmist, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits!"

When it is not permitted to be in retirement, but is in company with others, it takes its character from those with whom it is. In the good and proper sense of the expressions, "it becomes all things to all men." If they are persecuted and in prison, if they are sick, or blind, or lame, or deprived of reason, or are afflicted in any other manner, then it is full of compassion. It feels all their sufferings. It sheds sincere tears. It binds up their wounds. And these kind acts, which are not more full of truth and beauty than of moral power, are not the results of artifice, but of nature. It cannot do otherwise.

If, on the contrary, those with whom it associates at a given time are in health and in joy, it naturally rejoices in their joy, just as in the other case it has sorrow in their sorrow. Love, in the form of benevolent sympathy, is the just reward and the life of innocent pleasure. It may be said to double the happiness of every smile by the reflection of sympathetic happiness from itself.

10. The results in religious things are analogous to those in natural things. It harmonizes there also, in a manner appropriate to its own nature, with the weak and the strong; rejoicing with the one, and rendering pity and aid to the other. If, for instance, it enters the church on the Sabbath, and hears a man proclaiming God's message with sincerity, but still with evidences of want of intellectual power, it does not turn away with

scorn or coldness; but deeply sympathizes with him, and prays the more earnestly that the divine power may be revealed and perfected through human weakness. Its course, as would naturally be expected, is just the opposite of that of selfishness. Its desire is not to please *itself;* but, in its sympathy with God and his word, to help out, as it were, the struggling message.

And it is the same in other cases. Everywhere, freed as it is from the restrictions of a low and selfish spirit, it is seen to do the thing which is appropriate to the time and place; and always by the impulse of a spiritual nature, and never by human artifice. Accordingly, if we transfer this principle of holy love from the public assembly in the church to the smaller assembly of the private prayer-meeting, the same results are witnessed. It sees those assembled together, who, it is obvious, need to be conversed with, to be instructed, to be encouraged. Being always in sympathy with God, and knowing that its heavenly Father has called them together in order that they might be assisted, it does not set itself aside and wrap itself up in its own isolation; but feels in its own nature all the wants of those around, just as God does. It sees God in everything. It is God, who in his providence has assembled them together. It is God, who has placed itself in communication with them, and has done it with some benevolent object appropriate to their situation. It cannot be doubted, that the mighty heart of God desires their restoration; and he, who is united with God in love, desires it also. And such is the sympathy between his state of mind and the arrangements of Providence, that his thoughts and feelings and words may justly be expected to be in precise accordance with the occasion. And this feeling of benevolent sympathy, (such are the reciprocal influences of mind upon mind,)

will necessarily be known, and felt, and appreciated, by those with whom he sympathizes.

11. Certainly it is not surprising that love, operating without cessation in this divine manner, should have power. Powerful in its truth and powerful in its beauty, it acquires additional power by its mode of operation. Even, therefore, when it is estimated on natural principles, and with reference to its own laws of influence, we cannot doubt its mighty efficiency; — an efficiency, which is more than equal to all possible difficulties, when it is attended, as it cannot fail to be, with the divine presence and favor.

If these remarks are correct, then it may be added, that the holy man has power with his fellow-men, on the same general principles and much in the same way, as Christ had when here on earth. Christ, considered in his human nature, may truly be described as a man. And like other holy men, he was full of the Holy Ghost; — but the divine power which was in him showed itself to others chiefly through the medium of a holy sympathy. There is, perhaps, no trait of his character more remarkable than this. It was sympathy which brought the Saviour down from heaven to earth; it was sympathy which, in early times, carried apostles and martyrs to the stake; and it is sympathy, like that of the Saviour, which, at the present day, conducts his followers to the dwellings of the poor, the sick, and the ignorant; which secures their presence and supplications in the church and the prayer-meeting; which inspires their self-denying labors for the prisoner and the criminal; and which separates them from the endearments of home, and sends them to the toils, the sufferings, and the death of heathen lands.

12. What is here said of sympathy is, at the same

time, said of love. They are two names for one principle. Sympathy is only another name for love, when it is exercised in such a way as to harmonize, in the most beneficial manner, with the wants and the situation of others. We repeat, therefore, that a principle so divine as this must ultimately renovate and control the world. And it will do it in the manner which has already been mentioned, namely, by its attractive rather than its aggressive influence. Reaching in every direction, and attracting the attention of all men by its innate loveliness, it draws them gently but surely to itself. It prevails by means of its truth and beauty, and not less by that gentle touch of fellow-feeling, with which it weeps with every tear, and smiles upon every smile.

And one of its crowning glories is this. It conquers without knowing how or why it conquers; — the mighty power which is in it being hidden in its own simplicity of spirit.

CHAPTER X.

PRINCIPLES AND EXPLANATIONS ON THE SUBJECT OF PRACTICAL HOLINESS.

Definition of holiness. — Reference to the Hebrew and English terms. — Of wholeness or completeness in God. — Practical or experimental holiness implies the fulness of the divine life in the soul. — It is by means of God in the soul that the definition of holiness is realized. — Principles involved in the life of God in the soul, namely, entire consecration, appropriating faith, and living by the moment.

In connection with the views, which have hitherto been presented in this work, we are aided, I think, in obtaining some new and important ideas in relation to practical holiness. Holiness is often defined (and, perhaps, more generally than in any other way) to be conformity to God's law; —including conformity of the heart or feelings, as well as of the outward action. To this definition, or to others stated with the same import, though, perhaps, with some variation of terms, we do not propose to object. Perhaps it would not be easy to give a better one.

2. There is a great difference, however, between holiness defined and holiness practised; between holiness, abstractly considered, and holiness in realization. If, therefore, it may be important to know in what holiness consists by definition, it is certainly not less so to know who is the actual possessor of it. The Hebrew word, which is translated holiness, involves, as one of its ele-

ments, the idea of being set apart to a sacred or religious purpose. The English term holiness, in its original import, means *whole*-ness, completeness. And this idea, when the subject is contemplated in a practical point of view, ought not to be lost sight of. Accordingly, presenting the matter in a little different light from that in which it is usually presented, it would not be improper to say, that the holy man is one *who is whole or complete in God.* If every part of the life of the creature is filled up and completed with the life of God, then he is a *whole* or *holy* man, and not otherwise. A holy man, therefore, is one who freely surrenders himself to God, that he may receive everything from God in return; — so that, by means of a divine life, operating as a central principle at the seat or heart of his own nature, he is brought into entire harmony with God, and fully represents the divine conception or idea in faith, in knowledge, in love, in will, in harmonizing with providence, in everything. Holiness, therefore, considered practically, is the perfect restoration of the divine life in the soul.

3. In making these statements we are not to forget, (and we are the more solicitous that we should not forget it, because great truths sometimes lie in the close vicinity of great errors,) that man is a moral being endued with the power of free choice; and that the divine presence cannot exist in him, as a principle of life, except with *his own consent.* Moral life is a different thing from mere physical or instinctive life. There is a sense in which God is the life of everything. He is the life of the earth, the sky, the waters. He is the living principle of whatever the earth produces, — of the leaf, the flower, the plant, the tree. He is the life also, by means of their various and wonderful instincts, of all lower animals. But he is their life, in some cases, without

their knowing it at all, because they are not percipient existences; and in other cases, without their exhibiting any distinct recognition and knowledge, if it is possible that they have it. But it is not so with moral beings. God is and can be the life of such beings, only so far as he is so with their own consent. In the words of a modern English poet,

> "Our wills are ours; we know not how;
> Our wills are ours, *to make them thine.*" *

So that it is not more necessary that God should be our life, than it is that we should *choose* him to be so. If it be true that we cannot live without the life of God in the soul, it is also true that we cannot have that life without our own choice. And the reason is, that the principles of moral government, as it exists among beings who are subject to the supremacy of a divine government, require, without the exclusion of either, that there should be an harmonious action and union of the two in one. When God works within us with our own consen and in answer to our own prayer, then the human ana divine may be said to be reconciled, because the work of God, by the harmonious adjustment of the two, becomes both the work of God and the work of the creature. So that it is true, in all cases of holiness actually experienced, that the man lives and has a true life; while it is also true, and in a still higher sense, that God lives in him.

4. The consent or choice, of which we have been speaking, may not always be formally or expressly given; but it always exists as an element of the inward nature. And, accordingly, the alienation or loss of life depends upon the alienation or withdrawal of consent. The beings who inhabit other worlds, so far

* Tennyson.

as they remain holy beings, have never withdrawn their consent, and, consequently, have never fallen. Nothing could be so unpleasant to them as to be left to themselves. Accordingly, the desire to dethrone and alienate the great central principle has never entered their minds. It was otherwise with man. He chose to separate himself from God by trusting to his own wisdom, and yielding himself to his own desires. He thus lost the true life. And as there is and can be but one true life, he necessarily died. He lives, it is true; but it is a *dead* life. He lives physically, but is dead morally; he lives in the form, but is *dead* in the spirit. Death is his truth, and life is his fiction. So that, though both are true in a certain sense, it is the greater truth to say that he is *dead.*

5. Returning, therefore, to the leading idea involved in these remarks, we proceed to say, that man is restored from death just in proportion as he begins to live in and from God. And when, by exercising that consent which God allows him, he lives wholly from God by choosing to live wholly from him, and by exercising faith to that effect, then he is a *whole* or holy man. Taking the common definition, that holiness is entire conformity to God's law, still it is not the definition which makes a man holy, but the life of God in the soul. It is God within, that makes the definition available. Who properly understands God's law and knows what it is, unless he is first taught of God? Who loves God's law, unless love is first inspired within him by the breath of God himself? Who obeys God's law by bringing his will into conformity with it, except by the constant aids of divine grace?

Let it ever be remembered that there is only one that is holy in the higher and original sense. And that is *God.* All othe beings, whatever position they may sustain in

the universe, are holy only as they are holy in and by him. If there is anything at variance with the Scriptures, unsound in philosophy, and pernicious in practice, it is the idea of right or holy living from one's self; — that is to say, by means of the elements of strength and of guidance which he has in himself. It is no more philosophical than the doctrine of effect without a cause. Sooner shall the flower grow without the earth and rains to nourish it, or the mighty oak spring from the surface of the barren rock, than the soul of man live without having its roots struck, if we may so express it, in the bosom of the Infinite; and deriving, not a partnership of nourishment, but the whole of its nourishment from God.

6. These views go to confirm some of the principles laid down from time to time by writers, whose object it is to describe and to inculcate the higher states of religious experience. Among other principles, to which I have reference in this remark, are these: — personal and entire consecration; unwavering faith in God's acceptance of the consecration when it is once made; and that practical conformity of heart and life to God's providences, which is termed living by the moment. And it seems to me that this is a proper place briefly to call attention to these principles.

7. And our first remark, in relation to the principle of entire consecration, is, that no man can experience the highest results of religion, and become a truly holy man, unless he has thus consecrated himself to God. We do not suppose, however, that this, although it is indispensable in the growth of religion in the soul, is ordinarily the first thing that takes place. Before a man can consecrate himself to God, he must be led to see that he is alienated from God. Conviction of sin, therefore, would

naturally be the first thing. He could hardly be expected to return, until he had first been made sensible of his departure. But when this has been done, when he has been made in some degree to see and feel his situation, and to apply to Christ for relief, he may reasonably be expected, in his new position and in the exercise of a new faith, to lay himself, as it is sometimes expressed, upon the "altar of sacrifice." And in doing this, he alters his whole position. Dissatisfied with his past experience, he now ceases to look to himself, and to repose confidence in himself. In his blindness, of which he now for the first time has a proper conception, although he knew something of it before, he looks to another and higher source for light. In his weakness, which he finds after a greater or less experience to be universal and total, he looks somewhere else for strength. And this disposition to renounce himself, and to place himself entirely in the hands of God for strength and wisdom and whatever else is necessary for him, is what is generally understood to be meant by consecration.

But consecration, even when realized in the highest sense, is not enough. And, indeed, standing alone, and without the aid of other principles and feelings, it seems to be wholly unavailable.

8. And, accordingly, another principle, involved in the full or perfect return of the soul to God, is the necessity of *appropriating faith;* — that is to say, faith, that he who exercises it, is himself received of God, and that God will do in him and for him all that he has promised to do. To give ourselves to God, in order that we may receive him as our life, and at the same time not to believe in him as actually becoming our life in accordance with his promise, is virtually to annul our consecration, because it is impossible for us sincerely to consecrate

ourselves to a being, in whom we have not perfect confidence that he will do what he has promised to do. So that faith, as we have now explained the term, is as necessary as consecration.

9. When we have thus fully consecrated ourselves to God, and have faith in him, that he does now receive us, then the true life, which before was greatly obstructed in consequence of the consecration being imperfect or partial, flows from God into the soul with greatly increased freeness. The divine fountain is not only opened, but the obstructions, which had previously existed in the recipient, are removed; so that the elements of life are not only offered but received; and they gradually extend, and perhaps very soon, to every part of the soul. We now live with a true life; but it remains to be said, that we live and can live only *by the moment.*

As soon as God, by his in-dwelling presence, becomes the inspiration and life of the soul, he inspires in it those thoughts and feelings, and those only, which are appropriate to the present time. To every moment of time there is but one mental state which is suited. Between the circumstances of the time and the correspondent attributes of the mental state there is, and necessarily must be, a relationship as wise as infinite wisdom, and as perfect as infinite adjustment. God himself cannot alter it, because he cannot deviate from the perfect to the imperfect. God, therefore, as the infinite giver, (that is to say, when he is allowed to be and is accepted as the infinite giver,) can give only what he does give; and can give it only at the present time. The life, therefore, which we live in God, is and can be only life by the moment. The stream flows forever, but it strikes upon the soul only at the given time.

10. The man who thus consecrates himself to God,

and, in the exercise of faith, puts himself in the line of divine communication, so that he receives from God his knowledge, his feeling, and his purpose, is the truly holy man, because he is the *whole* man.

OH SACRED UNION WITH THE PERFECT MIND.

Oh sacred union with the perfect mind!
Transcendent bliss, which Thou alone canst give!
How blest are they, this pearl of price who find,
And, dead to earth, have learnt in Thee to live!

Thus, in thine arms of love, O God, lie!
Lost, and forever lost, to all but Thee.
My happy soul, since it hath learnt to die,
Hath found new life in thine Infinity.

O, go, and learn this lesson of the cross!
And tread the way which saints and prophets trod
Who, counting life, and self, and all things loss,
Have found in inward death the life of God.

CHAPTER XI.

ON UNION WITH GOD IN THE SPIRIT OF PRAYER.

God, in doing his own work, accepts of man's agency. — Remarks on the operations of the Divine mind. — Illustrations of the subject. — Souls in union with God harmonize with the Divine mind in its inward experiences. — God's desires and purposes made known, in some degree, in the experiences of his people. — Of the power of a good man's prayer.

THE work of redemption, in all the various forms in which it is carried on, is truly and emphatically God's work. But it is worthy of grateful notice, that our heavenly Father, in doing his own work, condescends to accept of human agency. Placing the Infinite in alliance with the finite, he allows man to be a co-worker with himself. And one of man's great works, that work without which nothing else is available, is *prayer*.

But, in saying this, it should be added, that we use the term prayer, not in the restricted sense of particular or specific supplication, but in the more general sense in which it is sometimes employed, namely, as expressive of communion with God in all its forms.

2. In order to illustrate properly the subject of union with God in prayer, it is necessary to lay down some principles in relation to Divine experience, as it may, perhaps, be termed; — that is to say, in relation to the feelings experienced in the mind of God. It is sometimes said of God, that, being infinite and perfect, he is

beyond the reach of emotionality; in other words, is an "*impassive*" existence, a being without feeling. The truth seems to us to be directly the opposite. God, so far from being the negation, is the perfection of feeling; that is to say, he feels, and cannot help feeling, just as he ought to feel, on all possible occasions.

3. This remark we proceed now to illustrate in some particulars. And, accordingly, it may be said, in the first place, that God, instead of being impassive and without sensibility, is a being of desires and aversions. Can it be supposed, for instance, that any good takes place in the universe, without God's desiring it to take place? And if such a supposition is impossible, it is equally so that any evil can take place without causing in him feelings of dissatisfaction and aversion. And this is not all. He not only desires good to take place, but he rejoices in it, when it has taken place. And he cannot do otherwise. And, on the other hand, he not only disapproves of wrong-doing, and desires that it may not take place, but it cannot take place without exciting grief in him.

It is a great and affecting truth, that the infinite God, in the true sense of the terms, is grieved with sinners. To be indifferent to sin in any of its forms or degrees, which is the same thing as being "impassive" in view of sin, is not in his nature. Such a supposition, namely, the sight of sin without experiencing any emotions, would imply, at least, a great imperfection of character. And if it is impossible for him to be indifferent to sin, it is certainly impossible for him to be pleased with it. To be grieved with sin, therefore, to be grieved with an infinite grief, is the necessary result of the infinity and perfection of his nature.

4. And it is the same with other feelings. It is prob-

ably not necessary to go through with them in detail. It is sufficient to say that God has, and necessarily must have, all those feelings which are appropriate to a perfectly wise, benevolent, and holy being. They correspond to things as they take place; and they vary exactly with the changing incidents of those things; every shade of alteration in the facts causing a shade of alteration in the corresponding feelings. So that it is true of the divine mind, that it is constantly in motion and constantly at rest at the same time; — the rest, or rather the perfect tranquillity, being the result of the perfection of its movement. It is not the rest of inaction, but of perfect adjustment; not the rest of impassive stagnation, but of emotional and moral harmony.

5. We proceed now to state, in connection with these brief explanations, that the soul, which is fully in the experience of divine union, will harmonize perfectly with the emotions and desires of the divine mind. If, for instance, there are soon to be especial operations of the Holy Spirit, and if souls are to be enlightened and restored to God, the preparations for such events will always exist first in the mind of God himself. It is not possible that such things should exist accidentally. They are the developments, coming in their appropriate order and under appropriate circumstances, of the divine thought, of the divine feeling. But if it be true that the heavings of the billows, whether gently or more powerfully, will first show themselves in the great ocean of thought and feeling, it will also be true that they will excite a correspondent movement in all smaller streams and fountains which are in alliance with them. In other words, God, in all good works, moves first; and the minds of his people, (all those who come within the particular sphere of movement,) move in harmony with him.

If God desires a particular thing to take place within their particular sphere of feeling and action, the desire of the Infinite mind sympathetically takes shape and develops itself in the finite mind; and the unspoken desire of the Father shows itself in the uttered prayer of the children. As in nature a small moaning sound of the winds often precedes a wide and powerful movement, so the sighing in the bosoms of the finite denotes an approaching movement of far greater power in the Infinite.

6. In connection with these views we have one of the methods given us, by which we discover the particular thing or purpose which now exists in the mind of God. It is obviously the dictate of the common sense of mankind, that the fact of unity of spirit implies and involves the fact of unity of movement. All those who are "born of God," in the higher sense of the expressions, (for instance, in the sense in which the expressions are used in St. John's epistles,) are in unity with him, whose spiritual birth is within them. It is not more true that God is their Father, than it is that they are God's children. They are one; — as the planets are one with the sun, as the billow is one with the ocean, as the branch is one with the vine, as the son is one with the father. And, in the existence of such union, there cannot, as a general thing, be a feeling or purpose in one party, without the existence of a correspondent feeling and purpose in the other. There are some limitations and exceptions undoubtedly; but, as a general thing, when we know the thoughts of God's true people, we know God's thoughts; when we know what God's true people desire, we know what God desires; when we know what the people of God are determined to do, we know what God is determined to do.

7. And another remark, following from what has been said is this: Whenever thou hearest God's people praying, perhaps in yonder little prayer-meeting, perhaps in some solitary place in the wilderness, perhaps in the desolate and lonely room of some poor widow, then know that the day of divine manifestation is near at hand. We cannot tell, perhaps, in what direction or in what way the manifestation of God's presence is to be made; but we cannot doubt the general fact that it is approaching.

All persons whose fulness of faith has brought them into the state of union with God, know this to be the case. They know (without knowing how they know it) that the movement of desire in their own souls, arising sometimes under remarkable circumstances and in a remarkable way, is the continuation, the distant but affiliated throbbing, of the great heart of the universe. And with such a conviction existing in their minds, it obviously becomes easy, and, perhaps we may say, necessary for them, to exercise that particular form of faith which is appropriate to their state of desire. Having, therefore, a desire for a particular thing, and believing that this desire is only the vibration from the great centre, the finite repetition of the infinite desire, they cannot doubt that there will be a manifestation of God, correspondent to that form of inward feeling which exists in him as well as in themselves.

8. If what has been said is correct, then it may properly be added, that there is something not only impressive but sublime, and almost terrible, in a holy man's prayer; whether it take the form of supplication, or of blessing, or of praise. That praying voice which thou hearest, broken though it may be with weakness and trembling with age, is not more the voice of man

than of God. Oh, do not trifle with it, if thou wouldst not trifle with God himself! Uttered in these last days, it is nevertheless true, that, in its attributes of origin and power, it is the voice of Abraham, of Moses, of Daniel; —men who had power with God, because God had power with them. It is the chain of communication between two worlds; the circumference, showing the light and heat of the centre. It brings down the sunlight of God's favor, or the lightning of his displeasure. If it curses thee, then thou art cursed; if it blesses thee, then thou art blessed. If it expresses itself in pity, then the tear of compassion is falling upon thee from the omniscient eye. Listen reverently, therefore, to the good man's prayer. God is in it.

CHAPTER XII.

ON THE RELATION OF THE CHARACTER OF MAN TO THE HAPPINESS OF GOD.

Holy beings constitute one of the elements of divine happiness. — God rejoices in his own nature; especially in the principle of holy love. — The joy thus arising is not so much by means of a reflex act, as by direct consciousness. — A second source of joy found in the contemplation of the happiness and holiness of his creatures — Remarks.

God is happy. Being infinite, he is infinitely happy. And it is interesting to know that holy beings, in whatever parts of the universe they exist, constitute one of the elements of the divine happiness. This being the case, there is such a thing (and it is certainly a most interesting and important consideration) as being united with God in the promotion of his own happiness. The humblest soul, when purified by divine grace, becomes a gem in the crown of the Infinite Father's bliss.

2. Undoubtedly the elements of the divine happiness are various. God, for instance, is happy in the knowledge of his own perfections; and especially is he happy in the consciousness that the central principle or life of his nature, that which brings the infinity of his natural attributes into action, is holy love. Most readily do we admit that he rejoices in his natural attributes also, in his inherent and universal knowledge, in his omnipresence and omnipotence; but more than all and

above all does he rejoice in that living and life-giving principle, which saves his merely natural attributes from evil applications, and renders them available to the highest purposes.

3. And the exceeding happiness which God thus experiences is not the result exclusively, nor chiefly, of a *reflex* act. Some writers seem to suppose (at least such would be the interpretation of their language if taken in its natural and obvious import) that God sits alone in an infinite solitude, and is happy chiefly by means of such an act; that is to say, by means of the mind turned back in acts of contemplation on its own inward nature. It seems to us better, and more in accordance with the divine nature, to say that God is happy, not so much by a series of reflective and deductive acts, as by *direct consciousness.*

Consciousness of happiness takes place when the happiness, flowing out naturally and necessarily from the existing states of the mind, pervades the mind and makes itself known without any care or effort on the part of the percipient subject. He, who loves with pure love, is happy; because happiness is a part of love's nature. Happiness, although there may be causes of affliction, which will diminish the amount of it at times, never was separated, and never can be separated, from love. To speak figuratively in the matter, happiness is the smile of love, and it sits just as naturally and beautifully upon love's countenance, as the smile does upon the countenance of any pure and benevolent being. Or, to use another illustration, it is love's bright and eternal seal engraven upon it with letters of light. They are thus connected by an eternal relationship. And God can be no more unconscious of happiness in love, than he can be unconscious of love itself.

4. But, although what has been said is a great and interesting truth, it is not all. There is another view of the subject. God's nature, including all his acts and feelings, corresponds precisely to the truth and relations of things. If he is a perfect being, it cannot be otherwise. It is not possible for him, being what he is, to sunder himself from the things he has made, and from the relations they sustain to himself and each other; nor to act otherwise, and to be otherwise, than in perfect consistency with such things and relations.

5. Among other works which are to be attributed to him, God has formed moral agents. Of all his various works, this is, in some respects, the greatest. He has formed angels; he has formed men. The mere fact that he has made them, which involves the additional fact of the relationship of cause and effect, in other words, of father and child, constitutes an alliance, which is both an alliance of morality and an alliance of the affections. In other words, he is allied to them by duty and allied to them by love.

If God is a good and holy being, it is not possible for him to create a being or beings susceptible of happiness, without making provision for their happiness, and without rejoicing in their happiness. To be indifferent to and not to rejoice in the happiness of his creatures, would be the characteristic of an evil and not of a good being. But no moral being which God has created can be truly and permanently happy without loving God and all other beings as God would have them love; in other words, without being holy. We come, then, to the conclusion, that another and very great source of God's happiness is the contemplation of the holiness and happiness of his creatures. If they are holy, they cannot

be otherwise than happy; and if they are happy, God must be happy in them.

6. The sources of God's happiness, therefore, are two-fold; — first, that simple but ever-flowing consciousness of happiness which has already been mentioned; and, second, the contemplation of his perfections, as they are imaged forth and realized objectively, that is to say, in the hearts and lives of his creatures. The moral universe around him, when unpolluted by sin, is the bright mirror of himself. It is the beauty, therefore, of his own being, seen in the infinitude of holy beings whom he has created, — the light of true glory kindled up in all parts of the universe, and reflected back upon the central fountain of light, — which constitutes a large share of his ineffable bliss. Considered in relation to the beings he has made, God may properly be regarded as the great moral centre, as the sun in the vast system of holy love, rejoicing in the infinite number of stars which his own radiance has kindled up around him.

7. These views seem to us to justify the remark made at the commencement of the chapter, namely, that the holiness of the creatures of God is one of the great elements of his happiness. The doctrine that the happiness of God rests for its support, in part at least, upon the holiness of his creatures, is one of great interest to men. It furnishes a new motive to holy effort. Everything we do has its correspondent result in the divine mind. There is not a throb in our bosoms, beating in the direction of pure and universal love, which does not excite joy in the bosom of our heavenly Father. It is not more true that angels rejoice, than it is that God rejoices, over every return from sin and every advance in holiness.

It is hardly possible to conceive of a higher result in the destiny of man than that which thus contributes to

the happiness of God. The thought, therefore, should animate us in all our efforts, namely, that God sees us; that he takes an interest in all our acts and feelings; and that when we are good our Father is happy. The light of our little star goes back to its parent sun. The small wave of our little fountain swells the broad billow of the mighty ocean. Can there be a higher motive to action than this?

Then let us labor on. God works. Let us work with him. Let us suffer, if needs be. Yea, let us rejoice in suffering; but neither in toil nor in suffering trusting to ourselves, but rather "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

PART EIGHTH.

OF THE PEACE OR REST OF THE SOUL IN A STATE OF UNION.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE TRUE IDEA OF A SOUL AT REST.

Rest, the result of the soul's advancement in religious experience. — Of counterfeits of the true rest. — Circumstances under which true rest exists. — Illustrations of the subject from the natural world. — Also from moral beings. — Application of the principles laid down to men.

Having thus completed the series of topics, which most naturally presented themselves to notice in connection with the subject of Divine Union, it remains only to consider the general aspect or appearance of the soul, which has once more united itself with its true source of life. And this may be done in a few words by saying, it is *a soul in rest or peace.*

2. Even in the beginning of its renovated life, when it first finds the blessedness of forgiveness, the soul experiences a degree of peace. But, compared with what it is subsequently, it is limited both in degree and permanency. At the early period to which we now refer, the soul finds rest from the condemnation of past sins, without finding rest from the sharpness of inward conflicts, from doubts, uncertainties, and heavy temptations. As it advances in religious experience, the elements of rest develop themselves. When, by the crucifixion of

self and the full resurrection of a new and purified spirit, it has become one with its heavenly Father, it then has a peace or rest approaching that of the heavenly world. "Thou wilt keep him in *perfect peace*," says the prophet Isaiah, "whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee."

3. It is important to understand correctly in what true rest or peace of the soul consists. There is a rest which is more so in appearance than reality; just as there is a semblance, a counterfeit of humility, of benevolence, and of other Christian graces. There are some persons whose apparent rest is to be ascribed to natural inertness or stupidity, and not to the sanctified adjustment of their powers. The true rest, however, is not to be regarded as identical with inaction.

The rest of the soul, in the highest spiritual sense of the terms, is that state of the soul, whether it be in repose or in action, which is in harmony with God. There is only one right position of the soul. All others must necessarily be wrong. And that position is one where the creature is brought into perfect adjustment with the Creator, by deriving its perceptions from God, by merging its affections in God's affections, and by harmonizing its will with God's will. In such a state of the soul there must necessarily be rest, if God has rest.

4. Of rest, as thus explained, — the rest, not of inaction, but of harmony of position, — we have illustrations everywhere. In this view of it, physical nature is at rest. It is impossible to look on the mingled expanse of land and water, of field and forest, without a deep sense of harmony and repose. The various objects which nature thus presents to us, "from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop that springeth out of the wall," are arranged in their appropriate place, and are clothed in strength and

beauty, but without the turmoil of labor. As their rest is the rest of harmony, a rest appropriate to their nature and involved in the fulfilment of their own laws of life, it is necessarily incidental to their growth and perfection. They grow in rest; — they shine in rest. Their rest, therefore, is at the same time their work. But their work, great as it is in extent, and wonderful in its variety, is always accomplished without effort and without the sense of fatigue. "Behold the lilies of the field. They toil not, neither do they spin. And yet I say unto you, that Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these."

Again, we may find an illustration of the subject in the aspect of repose, the beautiful stillness which characterizes the heavenly bodies, when seen in a cloudless sky at night. The beautiful orbs which then spangle and adorn the heavenly vault, are always in motion; always fulfilling the ends for which they were made; but, at the same time, they are never in a state of discordance and unrest, because their movement always harmonizes with law. Their constant motion, as in the language of an English poet, they "wheel unshaken through the void immense," does not cost them more labor than that constant proclamation of God's greatness, which the Scriptures ascribe to them. And it is not more wonderful that they should move in rest, and fulfil their destiny without labor, than that they should thus proclaim the glory of God by the mere perfection of their being, "without speech or language."* Both are the developments, the unconstrained but necessary results, of their own nature, and of their perfect adjustment to the facts and relations of things.

5. But if material existences may be described as being

* Psalm 19: 1—3.

in a state of rest while fulfilling the laws and purposes for which they exist, we may be certain that this may be said, with equal or greater truth, of all sentient and moral beings. All such beings, in conformity with that eternal wisdom which assigns to everything its place and its laws, have their sphere of action, their orbit of movement. By their capabilities of perception, feeling, and action, they are as precisely fitted to their sphere of movement as the material bodies which move and shine in the heavens, or as any classes of animated existences below them, all of which have their place, their sphere, their laws, their destination. And in the sphere which is thus allotted them, in their appropriate place and under their appropriate laws, they fulfil the ends of their existence by action carried on without any care or labor, which is inconsistent with true peace.

In making these remarks, we speak, of course, of their original constitution; of what they were designed to be; and of what they are, so long as they do not deviate from the principles and designs, in view of which they were formed. So long as this is the case, there will always be found to be a harmony of position, a truth and harmony of movement, which will always be characterized by peace. And on no other condition can it be said of them that they are either right in morals or happy in experience. Angels, for instance, have their sphere of life. To that sphere they are undoubtedly limited. And so long as they do not deviate from it, they exist in and have the experience of true spiritual rest; — not stupid, not inactive, not without thought, feeling, and purpose; but always in the perfection of repose, because always in the perfect harmony of physical and moral position. If they were otherwise than they are, if there were the least variation of adjustment in place or in action.

their rest would be disquieted, their joyous repose be broken.

6. But the truth and perfect emblem of all rest is God himself; — the infinite rest, the eternal peace, the just and unalterable tranquillity. He is in peace, because he is in the truth. The truth is in him; it encircles him, and proceeds forth from him. All things, which are made, are formed in accordance with those true and eternal ideas, which are inherent in the divine mind. Every action which proceeds from God is in harmony with the truth; every thought, also, which comes from the same source, is in harmony with the same truth. God could not possibly act, or think, or feel, otherwise than he does, without an infringement of the truth and right of things, and without placing himself in a false and wrong attitude. And this is the foundation of his rest. Like the sun in the midst of the solar system, while he is the source of movement and power to all things that exist, he acts without labor, controls without effort, occupying a centre which is unchangeable, because perfection can never have more than one centre, and resting there with perfect rest and peace of spirit, because his mighty thoughts and purposes all harmonize with his position.

7. If God rests by having his centre in himself, man may rest by having his centre in God; and the rest of man, having its supports in the Infinite Mind, may possess the same attributes as the rest of the Divinity. So that man derives his rest or peace of spirit from God, as he derives everything else from the same source. And just in proportion as we approach to quietness of spirit, founded on just principles, we approach in similitude to God. It is the quietist, — the man who moves unshaken in the sphere and path which God has marked out for him, unelated by joy, undepressed by sorrow, unallured

by temptations, unterrified by adversities,—it is this man, bearing about always the divine calmness of his crucified Elder Brother, who is truly *godlike*. And, just so far as he is like God in character, he is like him in inward tranquillity.

And it is such views as these which furnish the true explanation of the words of the Saviour, which conveyed to his followers his parting legacy: "PEACE I leave with you. *My* peace I give unto you."

'T IS NOT IN VAIN THE MIND.

'T is not in vain the mind,
By many a tempest driven,
Shall seek a resting-place to find,
A calm like that of heaven.

The weak one and dismayed,
Scarce knowing where to flee,
How happy, when he finds the aid
That comes alone from Thee!

In Thee, oh God, is REST!—
Rest from the world's desires,
From pride that agitates the breast,
From passion's angry fires.

In Thee is rest from fear,
That brings its strange alarm;
And sorrow, with its rising tear,
Thou hast the power to calm

CHAPTER II.

THE SOUL IN UNION RESTS FROM REASONINGS.

Introductory remarks. — The irreligious man given to questionings and reasonings. — Reasons of this. — Different with the man who is in harmony with God. — The holy man rests from reasonings. — Explanations. — Reasonableness and necessity of the view given. — The Saviour on the sea of Tiberias. — Remarks.

From the remarks made in the last chapter, we may understand the general nature of that rest which the soul experiences when it is brought into union with God. It is the rest of harmony, and not the rest of inaction; — a rest, calm and triumphant, which may justly be regarded as a foretaste of the heavenly world. It is a rest, however, which is susceptible of analysis, and which will be better understood by being considered in some particulars. We proceed, therefore, without proposing to exhaust the subject, to state more particularly, though briefly, some of its elements.

2. Among other things which will be mentioned in their order, the soul, in the highest results of spiritual experience, *rests from reasonings.* The reverse of this proposition is true in respect to those, who have never experienced the power and the guidance of religious sentiments. It is difficult for the soul, so long as it remains in a state of alienation from God, to suppress or avoid reasonings. It reasons, because it has lost the God of reason.

God is not more the centre of the life of the soul, than he is the centre of all truth; that is to say, he does not move the soul more to right action, than he does to right perception. When God is displaced from his centre in the soul, the relations of truth, considered as the subjects of our perceptions, are entirely unsettled. It is then that man, cast as it were on an ocean without soundings and without shore, knows not where he is, nor what he is. He resorts to reasoning, therefore, from the necessity of his position. So great are his perplexities, that he is obliged to reason. He doubts, he inquires, he compares, he draws conclusions, he pronounces judgment. His whole mental nature is in action, without its being the action of rest, the quiet movement of the divine order. Perhaps it is well that it should be so, until, by making inquiries without results, and without finding the true rest of the spirit, he feels the necessity of turning to God in humility, who is the only source of truth for the understanding, and of pacification for the heart.

3. It is different with the truly holy soul. The soul, which is united with God in the full exercise of faith, rests from reasonings. In order to understand this proposition, however, it is proper to say something in explanation of the terms used in it. The term REST is *relative*. It has relation to and implies the existence of the opposite, namely, unquietness or unrest. The term REASONING, is the name of that important intellectual power which compares and combines truth, in order to discover new truth. Under a divine direction, this power is susceptible of useful applications and results. It is then entirely calm in its action, and is consistent with the highest peace and joy of the spirit. To rest from such reasonings, from reasonings which do not disturb rest, would be an absurdity. Such rest would be cessation

from action, and not rest or quietude *in* action. When, therefore, the remark is made by spiritual writers, that the truly renewed soul has rest from reasonings, the meaning is, that it has rest from the vicious and perplexing reasonings of nature; in other words, from reasonings which are not from God. It is certainly a great religious grace to be free from such reasonings.

4. He who has no rest, except what he can find in reasonings, (we mean such reasonings as have just been described,) can never enjoy the true rest, because such reasoning never can give it. It is not an instrument adequate to such a result. And it may properly be added here, that there are some mysteries in the universe which reasoning, in any of its forms, has not power to solve. To a created mind, for instance, a mind which is uncreated must always be a mystery. From the nature of the case, God is a mystery to the human mind, because, being uncreated, he is, and always must be, incomprehensible. Incomprehensible in his nature, he is incomprehensible also in many of his creative and administrative acts. The apostle, in speaking of the depths of God's wisdom, exclaims: "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Rom. 11: 33. Well may those judgments be called unsearchable, and those ways past finding out, which pertain to the Infinite. It is obviously impossible that the finite should fully explore them.

5. As, therefore, there is a multitude of things which reasoning cannot resolve, all attempts to satisfy ourselves on such subjects must be attended with disquiet and anxiety. And the mind which is fully right with God, will not be likely to make such an attempt. The true wisdom is, to wish to know all that God would have us to know; to employ our perception and reasoning under

a divine guidance, and to seek nothing beyond that limit. All beyond that we may properly and safely leave, knowing that all things work together for the good of those who love God.

We may illustrate our position, perhaps, by comparing ourselves to persons on a voyage. Providence is the vessel, if we may so speak, in which we are embarked, and in which we are borne on over the vicissitudes of our allotment, over the waves of changing time. The vessel, in a world like this, where good and evil are conflicting, may be tossed with violence; but the mariners should be calm. Let the vessel float on. The winds and the currents are *not accidents;* but every movement of them, every rolling wave, every breath of wind, is under a divine control. The pilot is awake when he seems to sleep. The rest of God is not the rest of weakness or of forgetfulness, but the rest of security. And his work is not the less effectual and the less certain, because it is done "without observation." It is our business, when we have done all that he has commanded us, to leave the result with him, without fear and without questions.

The vessel which bore the Saviour over the sea of Tiberias, was tossed by the storm. His disciples came to him in great agitation, and called upon him for help. In quieting the raging of the tempest, he thought it a suitable occasion to rebuke them for giving themselves up so easily to the reasonings and fears of unbelieving nature. "And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, *O ye of little faith!* Then he arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?"

6. During some years past, there have been great

changes and perplexities in nations. All the positions of society have been reversed; problems have been started which affect the basis of civilization; governments have been overturned; the low have been elevated to places of power; and the great have been driven into exile or cast into dungeons. The man of the world reasons; politicians gather up the letters of history, and try to spell something which will disclose the mysteries of the future. But God keeps his own counsels. The wheels of his vast government move on. But he who trusts in God is not troubled. His belief in the Creator harmonizes and triumphs over the confusions of the creature. And faith is calm, where reason is confounded.

7. Thou who seekest the truth! Having exercised thy reason, till thou findest there is no peace in it, rest at last in the God of reason. Link the weakness of finite wisdom to the strength of Infinite wisdom. What thou knowest not, *believe that God knows.* Blindfolded to the future, nevertheless walk on, with God's hand to guide thee. And thus accept the fulness and strength of Infinite wisdom, which is pledged to all those who have faith, as a compensation for the deficiencies and weakness of thine own. God will work out problems for the humility of faith, which he hides from the confidence of unsanctified deduction. And thus the truly humble and devout Christian, who knows nothing but his Bible, will have more true peace of spirit than the unbelieving philosopher.

CHAPTER III.

THE SOUL N UNION RESTS FROM DESIRES.

Rest from desires a different thing from the extinction of desires. — Two classes of desires; — those attended with faith, and those which are not so. — Desires attended with faith are in accordance with the will of God, and are peaceful. — God's nature, as well as his promises, pledged in behalf of the man who has faith.

The soul that is wholly given to God, not only rests from disquieting and unprofitable reasonings, (the subject remarked upon in the last chapter,) but also from *desires*. Rest from desires, however, is a different thing from the extinction of desires. It would be incorrect to suppose that desires, in their various forms and modifications, are always wrong, or always attended with anxiety. The rest from desires, which the holy soul experiences, is a rest from all such desires as do not harmonize with the will of God. All desires, which are not in unity with the divine desires and purposes, are disquieting and full of trouble.

2. How many persons are the subjugated slaves of those inordinate appetites, which have their origin in our physical nature! How many are not merely agitated, but consumed as it were, by the desire of accumulating property! How general and strong is the desire of reputation! Many, in whom other desires are perhaps comparatively feeble, spend anxious days and toilsome nights

in seeking for power. But the truly holy person, whose great and only desire is that the will of the Lord may be done, has no desire of these things, or of any other things, except so far as God may see fit to inspire them. And all desires which harmonize with God's arrangements, and have their origin in a divine inspiration, are peaceful and happy.

3. "Love, *pure* love," says Mr. Fletcher, in some remarks addressed to Christians professing holiness, "is satisfied with the supreme good, with God. Beware, then, of desiring *anything but Him.* Now you desire nothing else. Every other desire is driven out; see that none enter in again. Keep thyself pure; let your eye *remain* single, and your whole body shall remain full of light. Admit no desire of pleasing food, or any other pleasure of sense; no desire of pleasing the eye or the imagination; no desire of money, of praise, or esteem; of happiness in any creature. You may bring these desires back; but you need not. You may feel them no more. Oh, stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free!"

4. This passage, written by a man of deep religious experience, clearly involves and sanctions the doctrine that holy souls rest from all desires, except such as are from a divine source. There are, then, two classes of desires; — those which are the product of a fallen and unsanctified nature, and those which are from God. Agitation and sorrow always attend the one class. True peace, the peace of Christ and of angels, is the characteristic of the other.

And we proceed now to say, that the ground of difference between them is this: Desires which are from God are attended with *faith;* and those which are not from him are *without faith.* The man of the world is full of

desires; but being constantly in doubt whether his desires will be accomplished or not, he is constantly the subject of agitation and grief. But the holy man, being the subject of those desires only which God has inspired within him, cannot doubt that God, who is never disappointed, will fulfil them in his own time and way. Having thus two facts in his mental experience at the same time, namely, desire and a belief in the fulfilment of desire, the element of uneasiness, which is involved in the wants of the one, is annulled by the pleasure which is involved in the supply or fulness of the other. In other words, faith stops the cravings of desire, by being itself the "*substance*" or fulfilment of its object; so that constant desire, supposing it to be constantly existing, is changed into constancy of fruition, constancy of peace.

5. In saying, therefore, that the holy man ceases from desires, we mean that he ceases from worldly desires; and in ceasing from such desires he has peace of soul. Does he desire food and clothing? Being limited in his desire by what is necessary for him, and by what God approves in him, he believes that God will see his wants supplied. And thus he is without anxiety. Does he desire a good name among men? As he desires it only that God may be glorified, and only so far as God allows him to desire it, he has faith that he will receive, and that he does now receive, so much of the world's favorable opinion as is best for him; and he asks and wants no more. God, who inspired the desire, has answered it at the moment; and he is perfectly satisfied. Does he desire power? As he desires no power but God's power, and such as God shall give him, he receives now, in the "evidence" and the "substance" of his faith, the very thing which he asks; and having nothing in possession, and everything by the omnipotence of belief, he can

almost say with the Saviour, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" And then he adds, with a still higher degree of faith, "But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be?" He does not desire, and does not ask, any power or any assistance which is inconsistent with God's present arrangements.

6. Aided by such views, we may possess a distinct and impressive appreciation of many passages of Scripture. "Consider the lilies of the field," says the Saviour, "how they grow. They toil not; neither do they spin. And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, *oh, ye of little faith!*" "Trust in the Lord," says the Psalmist, "and do good:—so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." "For the *Egyptians*," it is said in the prophet Isaiah, "shall help in vain, and to no purpose. Therefore, have I cried concerning this, *their strength is to sit still.*" That is to say, it is better to trust in God and to wait quietly for the manifestations of his providence, than to adopt any means or trust in any aid which he does not approve. Matt. 6: 28—30. Ps. 37: 3. Isa. 30: 7.

To the holy soul, which has no desires but God's desires, and which does not doubt, such promises are *realities.*

7. We would add here one remark more. It is well sometimes to remember, that the good which is promised to God's people is sure to them, not only because it is *promised*, but because it is a *necessary result of the excellences of the divine nature.* There is a love, a mercy

back of the promise, from which the promise originated; — not only God's word, but his nature is pledged.

In giving ourselves to God, (as all holy persons profess to do and must do,) we do not do it in part only. We not only renounce ourselves in the strict sense of the terms, but also the means of supporting ourselves; — not only our persons, but all earthly and finite dependencies. We not only give ourselves to God, to be servants to do his work, but to be *sons*, whom it is his delight to provide for. The support of those whom God has adopted into his family, and who are properly called his *sons*, ceases to be a contingency. It is only when and so long as we are out of God, and are separate from him, that we are left to our own wretched resources. In all other situations, it is not only a truth, but a necessity, that God should provide for us. If God had never promised to clothe, and feed, and watch over, his people, it would nevertheless have been done, because the holiness as well as the benevolence of his nature necessarily requires it. In other words, it is his nature to give where there is a disposition to receive; — to fill the hand which is truly open to take what is presented to it. His promise is only the expression of his nature.

It is thus, that, in having nothing, by mingling our desires with the divine desires, we have all things. The loss of ourselves by the moral union of ourselves with God, is necessarily the possession of God. In God is the fulfilment of our desires. In God, therefore, there is rest.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SOUL IN UNION RESTS FROM THE REPROOFS OF CONSCIENCE.*

Of the conflicts of those who are but partially sanctified. — Different state of those whose hearts are filled with love. — References to the Scriptures. — Explanation of the remarks found in Madame Guyon and others. — Holy persons not only freed from the reproofs of conscience, but moved to action by holy love rather than by feelings of constraint. — Of the peace and happiness of such.

In analyzing and explaining the elements of that pure and heavenly peace, which our Saviour has left both as the inheritance and the characteristic of truly holy souls, we proceed to remark, further, that they are at rest *from the reproofs of conscience.* This is a state of things very different from that which is experienced by souls that are only partially united with God. The latter, as they are going through the transition state from love commencing to love completed, have a constant conflict in themselves. Their inward good and evil are arrayed in opposition to each other. They see the right; but they continue, in some degree at least, to follow the wrong. And just so far as this is the case, they are under condemnation. And under such circumstances, they cannot fail to be uneasy and unhappy.

* See in connection with this chapter the remarks in Chap. VIII., Pt 2d, on the religion of love as compared with that of obligation.

2. It is not so with the soul which is given to God without reserve, and which loves him with the whole heart. Such a soul, renovated and purified by the Holy Spirit, may be said to be clothed with innocence; or, if such expressions should be considered as too strong by some, certain it is, that conscience does not condemn it. "There is no condemnation," says the apostle Paul, "to them which are in Christ Jesus; who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." In the epistles of John, also, are expressions, which distinctly recognize the state of freedom from condemnation.

3. And this explains a remark which we sometimes find in the lives of devoted Christians. It seems to them, as they sometimes say, as if they had lost their conscience. In the writings of Madame Guyon,* both in the work entitled the "Torrents," and also in her "Letters," there are repeated references to this peculiar state of experience. The expressions which such persons employ have their foundation in the contrast of the present with their past position. They think they have lost their conscience, because they are *not now the subjects of a certain mode of its activity*. Formerly their good was so much mixed with evil, that they were constantly the subjects, more or less, of inward admonition; so much so, that this seemed to them almost the whole office of conscience. And, accordingly, when they experienced a higher degree of love, and no longer felt the need of such admonitions and reproofs, they seemed, in the absence of its chastisements, to have lost conscience itself.

4. After a while they learn that conscience, operating differently in the evil and the good, has its smiles as well as its frowns; and that its action is felt in that internal approbation which constantly attends them. Angels

* Les Torrens, P. II., Ch. 2, § 3. Lettres, Vol. V., Let. 22, § 6.

have conscience; God has conscience; but they never feel its lash; nor is it possible for them, while they remain what they are, ever to know its existence as a part of their own nature, except by the approbation of its smiles. The cessation or rest, therefore, which the persons to whom we allude experience, is not a cessation from conscience, but only from the condemnation of conscience.

5. And this is not all. There is a rest, in holy persons, not only from the *reproofs* or condemnations of conscience, (a view which naturally arrests our attention in the first instance,) but also, with proper explanations of the remark, from the compulsory or *constraining* power of conscience. The constraints of conscience, (which is only another expression for those coercive feelings of obligation which require us to pursue a right course,) *precede* action; while the reproofs of conscience, on the other hand, *follow* action. The holy soul, the soul which has passed from a mixed state to a state where holy love becomes the exclusive principle of action, does not appear to experience, and certainly not to be conscious of, those compulsory influences to which we have referred. It does not feel the reproofs of conscience, because it does not do wrong. It does not feel the compulsions or constraints of conscience, because, being moved by perfect love, it fulfils the will of God, and does right *without constraint.*

And is there, in fact, any occasion for such constraint? Where love is perfect, the motive involved in the constraining power of conscience is not felt, because it is not needed. The subject of such love is re-constituted with a new element of holy affection, with a love-*being* or love-*existence*, such as it never had before. It has freely given itself to God to be moved by him; — and he

moves it by making it a "partaker of the divine nature." So that from this time such an one may be said to act by *nature*, and not by constraint; by a self-moved life at the centre, and not by a compulsive instigation, which has no higher office than to guard and compel the centre. In having a life of love, flowing first from God, and then from the centre of our spirits, we have that and the whole of that which the constraining instigation of conscience requires; and, this being done, its office in this respect practically ceases. It would be a work of supererogation to drive a soul which goes without driving. Accordingly it is at once appeased in its anger, and quiet in its anxiety. It lays aside its admonitions as well as its scourge; and, as pleased with the good as it is displeased with the wicked, it strews our path with flowers.

6. Thus the soul has rest. From that happy hour, being re-constituted with a love-nature and made love-beings, we become also happy or joyous beings. And this is so much the case, that happiness, as well as love flowing out of the depths of the soul, may be said to be a part of our nature. What can injure us? Conscience itself becomes the companion and playmate of love, and hides itself in its bosom. Shielded by innocence, we come to God without fear. The soul expands itself as confidingly and lovingly to God's presence and favor, as the flowers open to the sun. God, who before appeared to us in his frowns and as a consuming fire, now "lays his terrors by."

CHAPTER V.

THE SOUL IN UNION RESTS FROM DISQUIETING FEARS.

Fear, the source of agitation and sorrow. — The truly holy man delivered from the fear of want, sickness, and persecution. — Reference to the writings of John Climachus. — All sinful fear of God taken away.

It is proper to be said further, in connection with this subject, that the soul which is brought into entire harmony with God, has rest from all disquieting fears. It is a declaration of the Scriptures, and is no less evident from one's own consciousness, that "*fear hath torment.*" 2 John 4: 18. In all cases, fear diminishes happiness; and, when it is very great, it is almost inconsistent with any degree of happiness. It produces distrust; it causes agitation; it sunders friendship; it alienates love. From the wretchedness connected with this state of mind, the holy man has true rest; and no other man has.

2. Among other things which tend to illustrate these general views, we proceed to remark, that the holy man is delivered from the fear of want. The unrighteous man fears that he will come to want, because he has no faith. On the contrary, where faith and love are perfect, bread will not fail. God will multiply the widow's vessel of oil, or send his ravens, as he did to the famishing prophet, when his people who trust in him are hungry. "I have been young," says the Psalmist "and now am

old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." Ps. 37: 25.

It is proper to add here, it is not the mere fact that God will provide for his people, which delivers from fear; but the *belief*, the full confidence, that he will do it. And this is not all. The people of God are willing to suffer want, are willing to be as the Saviour was, who had no place to lay his head, if God sees it best. In connection with such feelings, it is impossible for fear to exist.

3. Again, the man who in the exercise of faith is fully united to God, is delivered from the fear of sickness and death. Undoubtedly, in themselves considered, sickness and death are afflictions. The truly devoted and godly man understands this as well as others. But fully believing that all things work together for the good of those who love God, he is freed from anxiety. He welcomes suffering, when God sends it, in whatever form it may come. The physical suffering and weakness which attend upon sickness, become means of growth in grace; and, so far from being causes of complaint, are welcomed and rejoiced in as the forerunners of increased purity and happiness. And while many are constantly subject to bondage, through fear of death, the holy man looks upon it as the end of sorrow and the beginning of glory.

4. The man, in whom the divine nature is reconstituted, is freed from the fear of his fellow-man. It is one of the artifices of Satan to attack holy men through the aids of those who are unholy; by employing their lips in the utterance of evil surmises and falsehoods, and sometimes by exciting them to more open attacks. The holy man leaves his cause with God. He would not plead it himself if he could. He stands without fear, as Christ did before the bar of Pilate, in the sublimity of a

triumphant silence. He rejoices in spirit, knowing that, at the appointed time, when faith and patience have had their perfect work, he shall hear the voice of his own great Defender.

Nay more, armies of men, as well as individuals, have ceased to cause terror. Dungeons, which nations have erected, bring no alarm. He has no fear, because he finds the defence of the future in the history of the past. The walls of cities have fallen before the voice of the Lord. Brazen gates have been sundered. Iron chains have been separated like flax at the touch of fire. What has been, will be. No power can hurt him, because infinite power is his protection. And even if there is no direct interposition, and evil men are allowed to triumph for a time, the sense of suffering is overwhelmed and lost in the joy that he is accounted worthy to suffer.

5. And, what is greater than all, he has rest from the fear of the divine displeasure. John Climachus,* one of the devout and learned anchorites of Mount Sinai, in referring to the inward state of a holy man with whose history he had become acquainted, represents the divine grace to have been so marked and powerful in its operations as to have taken away from him apparently even *the fear of God.* Although such expressions are liable to be misunderstood, it is beyond question that they are susceptible of a meaning which involves an important truth. It is a universal truth, applicable in all times and situations, and not a particular truth limited to specific cases, that "*perfect love casts out fear.*" Love and fear, in their very nature, are antagonistical principles. Where love rules, fear is extinguished. The triumph of the one is necessarily the exclusion of the other.

* Œuvres de S. Jean Climaque, Abbè du Mont Sinai, comprenant L'Echelle Sainte, &c. Degrè, 29.

6. But, in laying down this universal principle, we must have a regard to the meaning of terms. The fear which is based upon the consciousness of guilt, is a different thing from that fear which is synonymous with reverence. It is certain, where love is perfected in the heart, that all fear which results from sin is extinguished. In that sense of the term, or rather with that limitation of the use of the term, the holy man ceases to fear. God has no sooner merged the character of a judge in that of a friend, than the man of God delights to be with him, and to converse with him. It is no more his nature to flee from God under the influence of sin ul fear, than it is the nature of an innocent child to flee from its mother. He rests, like calm and helpless infancy, on the arm that is wreathed with lightnings. The lightnings have no terror for innocence; but rather, divested of everything which can harm it, they shine like flowers, and play round it like sunbeams. But to those who are in a state of fear, originating in sin, they retain the terrors of their original nature, smiting with a power which rends the rocks in pieces, and burning with a consuming fire.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SOUL IN UNION RESTS FROM CONFLICTS WITH PROVIDENCE.

The sinful man at war with Providence. — The holy man in harmony with Providence. — Of the extent of God's providence. — It extends to natural things, to events, to feelings. — In all these things, and in others, the holy man is in harmony with Providence and at peace.

The sinful man has no true peace, among other sources of disquiet, because his position is at variance with Providence. One view to be taken of sin, is, that it is war. It is not only war against God's character, but against his commands; not only war against his commands, but against his providential arrangements. God has one way and plan of arrangement; the sinful man, who is in a state of rebellion against God, has another plan. The centre of God's arrangements is benevolence or the love of all; the centre of the sinful man's arrangements is the inordinate love of himself. Radiating from such different centres, the plans which are formed continually come in conflict. Under such circumstances it is impossible that the sinner should have rest. Finding himself face to face in opposition to what God has determined, and thus in conflicting lines of movement, he is continually met and counteracted, continually smitten and driven back. His life is a warfare commenced and carried on under the most hopeless circumstances; a warfare attended everywhere and unceasingly with discomfiture and suffering.

2. On the contrary, the man who is united with God in the possession of a common central feeling, is necessarily united with him in all the movements and arrangements which he makes. In other words, he rests from the perplexities and uncertainties of making his own choice, by accepting, under all circumstances, the choice which his heavenly Father has made for him. With the exception of sin, God's choice never varies, and never can vary, from the facts and incidents of that state of things which now exists. And it is this choice, however painful it may be in some of its personal relations, which the godly man takes and sanctions as his own. So that his choice being already made by the unvarying adoption of that which is from God, he may be said not to have any preference of his own, but to rest from his own choice, that he may repose in God's choice. And God's choice is only another name for his providence. There is, therefore, no conflict; there never can be any.

3. God's providence extends both to things and events Inanimate nature, even in the lowest forms, is under the divine care. Not a rock is placed without a hand that placed it. Not a tree grows without a divine vitality, which is the inspiration of its growth. Not a wave of the ocean rolls without the power of God's presence to propel it. The storms and the earthquakes are the Lord's.

God is thus the life of nature. And the man who is in harmony with God, has no controversy with him in any of these things. On the contrary, he accepts all, is at peace with all.

4. God is also the life of events, including in that term human actions. There is no good action which is not from God. The wisdom of the Supreme mind is the good man's inspiration. And, on the other hand

there is no evil action which God does not notice, and over which he has not some degree of control. The essence of evil actions, it is well understood, is the *evil motive from which they proceed*, — a motive which is not and cannot be from God; but still, God will not allow the action, which proceeds from the motive, to take effect, except in the manner and the degree which pleases him. In other words, God has the prerogative, which can pertain only to an *infinite* being, of overruling evil, and of bringing good out of it. So that there is a providence of evil as well as a providence of good. And hence, the good man can be in peace even when the evil man triumphs, because he knows that the "triumphing of the wicked is short."

5. Again, God's providence is *internal* as well as external. He is the inspirer of the feelings of the heart as well as the director and controller of outward events. Our thoughts and feelings are from God, so far as they are right thoughts and right feelings. Accordingly, the man who is fully united with God, rests from all anxiety in relation to the particular form or mode of his inward experience. Among the various thoughts and feelings which are right and good, he has no choice. For instance, he does not desire inward joys, nor great illuminations of mind, nor freedom and gifts of utterance; but desires and accepts only that degree of light and joy, whether more or less, which God sees fit to send. It is true we are directed to covet "the best gifts,"* but it is equally true that those gifts are the best *which God selects and gives.* In everything, in gifts and the exercise of gifts, for time and for eternity, the wise man chooses for himself what God chooses for him: which is

* 1 Cor. 12: 31.

the same as to say that he rests from choice, or that he is without choice. God's providence is his guide.

6. Rest, or pacification in God's providences, implies and secures the fact of rest or peace in other things, which have an indirect relation to his providences. For instance, he who is at peace with Providence, has rest *from vain and wandering imaginations.* He is unlike other persons in this respect, who constantly recur in their imaginations to other scenes and other situations, and people them with a felicity which is the creation of their own minds. If his imagination ever goes beyond the sphere which Providence has assigned him, it does so under a divine guidance, and not at the instigation of unholy discontent.

7. Again, he who is at peace with Providence experiences, as one of the incidental results of his position in this respect, a peace or rest *from feelings of envy.* The occasion of envy is the existence, or supposed existence, of superiority in others. It is impossible, therefore, for him to envy others, because, viewing all things as he does in the light of God, he does not and cannot believe that the situation of others is better than his own. Accordingly, he is at rest from the agitations of this baneful passion.

8. He has rest also from *easily offended and revengeful feelings.* If he has been injured by another, he knows that his heavenly Father, without originating the unholy impulse, has seen fit, for wise reasons, to direct its application against himself. He receives the blow with a quiet spirit, as one which is calculated to strengthen his own piety, while he has pity for him who inflicts it. Considered in relation to himself, he accepts all, approves all, rejoices in all. In the remarkable language of the apostle Paul, which precisely describes his situation, he

"suffers long and is kind; he envies not; is not easily provoked; thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." 1st Corinthians, ch. 13.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SOUL IN UNION RESTS FROM THE ANXIETIES OF LABOR.

Definition of the term labor. — As thus defined, there is no such thing as labor in heaven. — In the sense of the term, as explained, the truly holy man rests from labor. — Reasons of this view. — First, God works in him. — Second, his labor is inspired by love. — Third, he is sure of success. — Fourth, it is the natural tendency of holiness to diffuse itself. — Fifth, God rewards him by sharing his burden. — Remarks.

THERE is another point of view, in which the subject may properly be presented to notice. In addition to the elements of rest already mentioned, the soul which is fully the Lord's may be said also to rest from labor. This depends in part, however, upon the meaning which we attach to the term labor. As the term is commonly understood, it implies some degree, more or less according to the circumstances, of forethought and calculation, strivings of the will, and physical effort. But this is not all. It implies, also, not only effort, but pain. There is something unpleasant in it. In this view of the import of the term, God does not labor; angels do not labor; nor do glorified saints. There is obviously no such thing as labor of this sort in heaven. There is life; there is activity; everything is done which ought to be done; but all labor which involves pain ceases.

2. And, to a considerable extent, these views are true of the holy man in the present life. He does not cease

to be active, and to do what the providence of God calls him to do; on the contrary, coöperating with God in the great work of redemption, he finds and knows no idle moments; but still, the work which he does, ceases so far to possess the ordinary attributes of labor, that he may be said, in a certain sense, to cease from labor.

It will be kept in mind by the reader, that this is not said of the sinful man, nor of the partially sanctified man, but of the man whose soul, freed from the separations of self, has passed into a state of entire union with God. Undoubtedly the rest, which is experienced even by such an one, is not so perfect, in consequence of the imperfections and hindrances of the body, as it will be hereafter; but still, it is so real and great, and besides, so naturally results from the principles involved in holy living, that it deserves to be noticed.

3. One reason that the labor of the truly holy man ceases to be labor, in the ordinary sense of that term, is, that there is a divine power *working in him.* The Infinite Mind is necessarily the life of the created and finite mind, so long as sin does not separate them from each other. Man is the instrument, in which and through which God works. The Saviour himself said, "I can of myself do nothing." The wonderful power which was manifested in him, in his incarnate state, had its source in his Father, from whom, in the exercise of faith, he continually drew divine strength.* The language of Paul and of other holy men, who derived their strength from God through Christ, is, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Philipp. 4: 13. There is an inward conviction, a consciousness felt in the depths of the pious man's spiritual nature, that virtue has a necessary alliance with power, and that the good man

* See Acts, Ch. 1: 3, and other passages of similar import

never can be deserted. God, who inspires this remarkable conviction, is pledged, both by nature and by promise, to see it realized. And thus the man of God, who feels this increased strength, finds that easy which would otherwise be hard to him.

4. Another reason why the labor of the holy man, whose soul is in union with God, ceases to be labor in the ordinary sense of that term, is, that his labor is inspired by *love*. The labor of those who do everything from love, is a very different thing from the labor of those who act exclusively or chiefly from the impulse of conscience and the forced efforts of the will. The single circumstance of labor's being originated with or without the inspiration of the heart, makes all possible difference. The labor of the partially sanctified man, who stirs himself to action by reasonings and reflections, and by the efforts of the will, is the recreation, the happiness of the holy man. The holy man works without knowing that he works; because love converts what would otherwise be work into the spontaneous activity of a pleased and joyous nature. In doing what he loves to do, he labors just as much as the birds do when they fly in the air and sing; and just as much as the angels do, whose nature it is to fulfil the commands of their heavenly Father.

5. In saying, therefore, that the holy soul rests from labor, we do not mean that it rests from action; but that its action is so easy and natural, so harmonious at the same time with the desires of the soul and with the arrangements of Providence, that it is exempt from the attributes of pain and distastefulness which are commonly associated with labor.

6. Another reason that the labor of the holy man ceases to be labor, is this; he knows that he will be

prospered in what he does; in other words, that his "labor is not in vain in the Lord." There are many promises to this effect. But this is not all. He knows that, when God imposes on his people something to be done, it is not merely to secure a particular outward result, but also, and sometimes chiefly, for the purpose of training and disciplining the inward dispositions. And if he fails to do the particular thing which is required to be done, still, if the effort has resulted in the trial and strengthening of his faith and obedience, he has his reward. He is sure of success in one way or the other. This imparts a joyousness of spirit, which gives a new character to his toil. Labor, which is enlivened by the joy of anticipated fruition, is rendered by that circumstance so delightful, that it virtually ceases to be labor.

7. Again, true holiness acts and influences by its innate tendencies. It merely wants opportunities of action, and not appliances and instigations to action. It is not the language of Scripture, *make* thy light shine, but *let* thy light shine. In partially sanctified hearts, where the light is comparatively small, there is a disposition, which, however, in itself considered, is not to be blamed, to set the light off to the best advantage, to place it in favorable positions, to increase it by concentrating it in and reflecting it abroad on the multitude, through the instrumentality of persons of "good reputation." This is laudable under the circumstances. But if the light were full and bright at the centre, there would not be need of this additional labor at the circumference. And the reason of this remark is, that it is the nature of holiness to diffuse itself, if there are no obstacles in the way. It cannot conceal itself, if it would. The first thing is its existence; the next is, to *let* it shine;—not to hide it, but to let it *be;*—stationed as it is by the wisdom

of a heavenly position as well as bright by a heavenly radiance.

The light of Jesus Christ shone brightly long before he commenced his public apostolic life. It shone, because brightness was in his nature; and, therefore, it was his nature to shine. When he was very young, it was said of him, by lips which repeated it to others, that there is a lad in the town of Nazareth, living in a poor and retired family, who has God with him. His candle first diffused its light in a very small circle; but within the limits of that circle it shone freely and clearly in the rays of sincere and peaceable dispositions. He was not a holy man, but a holy boy; and, being such, he was known and felt to be such. As he grew older, working day by day at the trade of a carpenter, the same unobtrusive sincerity, the same forbearance and love, attended by perfect faith in his heavenly Father, attracted attention in a sphere somewhat enlarged, and drew to him some loving hearts that were affected by the innate power of holiness. Thus, though he came, as it were, silently, without effort and without observation, the light shone from him by its own nature; a light gentle but pure; penetrating quietly, but surely, in every direction; until it was whispered from the lips of the faithful, throughout Palestine, that a holy one had come. There was, indeed, a mystery resting upon him and his character, because he was a man unannounced, unknown; but still he was a real and divine presence, though indistinctly felt and appreciated, even before he appeared publicly and authoritatively as the messenger of God. His light shone *of itself*.

8. Again, the labor of the holy man ceases to be labor, in the ordinary sense of that term, not only for the reasons which have been mentioned, but because his humble

trust in God actually supplies the place, in many cases, of positive effort. In other words, God does now reward him by actually sharing and lightening the burden which is upon him. God, whose happiness consists in the exercise of love, always delights to do the work of his people, when the circumstances are such as to allow him to do it. Man's first work, and, as compared with others, almost his only work, is to return from his sins, and to enter into union with his Maker. From that moment he not only may, but he ought to, give up all anxiety. God will never desert him. God will hold up and inspirit his weary arm. Even if the body labors, the anxieties of the spirit should cease.

See the father of a numerous family. Day after day he toils without ceasing. Their food, their clothing, their morals, their education, their health, all successively occupy his thoughts, fill him with anxiety, and give him no rest. He is burdened and borne down to the dust, because he attempts *to bear the burden alone.* If he were a man of perfect faith, he would labor less; and at the same time with greatly improved results. His faith would honor God, and would secure the fulfilment of the promises. It would make God present, because it would necessarily secure the coöperation of his loving nature. And this is not all. It would reäct upon his own character; — giving clearness to truth, submission in sorrow, strength in temptation, patience under rebuke, and love at all times. So that, under the purifying power of a higher trust, an influence would emanate from his own character. His silence would speak. And the inaction of God, if we may so express it, (that is to say, the silent and quiet operation of God in the soul,) would do more than the activity of the creature.

9. Certainly, in view of such considerations as these

we have great reason for saying, if we cannot safely say anything more, that the labor of the man of God is a very different thing from the labor of the man of the world. It is exempt, at least, from all anxiety. And hence that calmness, which is seated on his brow. No expression of impatience, no scowl of hatred, no frown of anger; but a constant cheerfulness, which shows that the principles of faith and love at the centre make all things easy. It is one of the signs, therefore, of the truly holy man, that he is happy in his work; so much so, that under the existing circumstances, he could not be equally happy without work. So that, virtually, his work is his recreation; his labor is his play.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HOLY SOUL HAS PEACE, BECAUSE WHAT IT WANTS IN ITSELF IT FINDS IN GOD.

The holy man is dead, but has life in God. — He ceases to act, but God acts in him. — He always suffers, but is always happy. — He is ignorant, but has divine wisdom. — He is poor, but has riches in God. — Is weak, but has strength in God. — Experience of Paul.

As the Christian is one who has passed from a state of nature to a state of grace, there are expressions applicable to him which are directly opposite to each other in their import. Such expressions, used antithetically, are frequently employed in the Scriptures. To some of these expressions, which will apply appropriately only to the eminently devoted Christian, we propose to give a little attention; and, in doing this, we shall obtain another view of the subject under consideration, and see other sources or elements of that divine peace, which characterizes the holy soul.

2. It is said, for instance, that the Christian who has experienced in himself the highest results of religion, *is dead, and is alive again.* That is to say, he is dead to private aims and private interests; dead to selfish passions, prejudices and pleasures; dead to worldly reputation and honor. But, being dead to himself and whatever concerns himself, he is alive to God; alive to the aims and interests for which Christ came down from

heaven, alive to the honor which comes from God, and from God only.

3. Again, it is sometimes said by experimental writers, in relation to such a Christian, that he *is without action, and yet always acting*. That is to say, he has no action which comes from himself, — no action originated on worldly principles, none which he can call his own, — but he is always acting in harmony with Providence; moving as he is moved upon; instructed and actuated by the outward occasions as they are laid hold of and interpreted by the inward principle; retreating, going forward, or standing still, just as the voice of God in the soul directs: so that it is not more true that he never acts than it is that he always acts. Action is as essential to him as life; but still it is action *in* God and *for* God.

4. Again, it may properly be said of the man who is truly regenerated, and is fashioned anew into the image of Christ, that he is *always suffering, and yet always happy*. The natural and necessary opposition between the state of his own soul and the condition of things around him causes affliction. The inhabitant of a dying body, and surrounded by a sinning world, pierced by the thorns of the flesh and by the arrows of Satan, the law of his outward position and the still lingering trials of his fallen nature necessarily constitute him, till his last footstep on this stricken and bleeding earth, "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." But if, in some departments of his mental being, he is always suffering, in others he is always happy. And he is so, because, being born of God and made a partaker of the divine nature, he cannot be otherwise. In the inmost recesses of the soul, in that part which is central and controlling to all the rest, faith stands unshaken; faith

which gives sight to the blind and strength to the weak; faith which proclaims sunshine after the storm, victory after the contest, a present God and everlasting rest.

5. He is *ignorant*, and feels himself to be so, *and yet is full of divine wisdom.* He is ignorant, comparatively speaking, because there are many things, the knowledge of which is not profitable, and which, therefore, he does not seek. He cannot seek knowledge *in his own will* any more than he can seek anything else. He can say with the utmost sincerity, "I know nothing;" because all human knowledge, as compared with divine, is, and must be, utter ignorance. And yet, being a "son of God," and being "led by the Holy Spirit," he feels that he may and will possess all that knowledge which will be necessary for him. If he knows but little, he knows *enough;* and if he has no knowledge from himself, he still has God for a teacher.

6. Of the truly holy man it can be said, also, he is poor, and yet he has *all riches;* he is poor, because he sits loosely to the world, because he cannot set his affections upon it, and because he has nothing which he can call his own. That, which the world calls *his*, he calls *God's.* He has nothing but what God gives him, and if, in the arrangements of divine providence, God does not see fit to give him anything, he is still rich in the possession of Him, who makes him poor. He may be said to be *desolate;* but he can never be *deserted.* He is a poor son; but he has a rich Father; so that, although he has nothing in possession, he can never come to want. God is his banker, who both keeps the funds, and tells him when and how to draw for them; so that he is free from care as the birds of heaven and the lilies of the field.

7. He is *weak*, and yet he has *all power.* He has

renounced his own strength, as well as his own wisdom. But having no power in himself, he may be said to have all power in God. He can almost say with the Saviour, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" And He, who gives him strength, gives him also honor; so that he, who is despised among men, has all honor with God. His name is cast out as evil among men; but it is written and registered in bright letters on the heart of the Infinite.

8. It is in such views that we find an explanation of the contrasted but triumphant expressions of the Apostle Paul, in his second Epistle to the Corinthians: "We are troubled on every side, yet *not distressed;* we are perplexed, but not *in despair;* persecuted, but *not forsaken;* cast down, but *not destroyed.*"

"For which cause," he adds, "we faint not; but, though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are unseen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are unseen are eternal."

CHAPTER IX.

THE HOLY SOUL HAS PEACE, BECAUSE ITS ACTION IS NATURAL AND WITHOUT EFFORT.

Natural action necessarily easy and quiet action. — Illustrations of the subject. — The natural life of the sinful man. — The natural life of the holy man. — Of the operations of a holy life when it has become a new nature. — Of the rest or peace which is connected with the state of mind. — Reference to Madame Guyon. — Remarks.

We proceed further to say, in the consideration of the elements of true spiritual peace, that the degree of peace will correspond to the advancement of the soul in holiness. And one reason of this, among others, is, that the new principle of holiness, when it has become fully engrafted and established in the soul, has all the attributes of a *new nature*. It certainly is not contrary either to the facts or the reason of the case, to speak of the ruling principle, in a soul which is fully united with God, as operating naturally. And natural action, — that is to say, action flowing from nature, in distinction from that which originates from forced efforts of the will made against nature, — is, of course, easy, quiet, peaceful action. But it is necessary to give some explanations of this view.

2. That which acts naturally has a natural life. A natural life is that life which develops itself in accordance with the principles of its own nature, and which, in doing so, is true and harmonious to itself. The sin-

ner, in his unregenerated state, lives and acts naturally in sinning; because that which he does is not only his own doing, but is done voluntarily and easily, and harmonizes with its own central principle of movement. The central principle in fallen man is *self*. The great law of selfishness, which requires him to place himself first, and God and humanity under him, regulates all his actions. From this principle, which operates as an internal and life-giving force, his actions flow out as constantly and as naturally as trees grow in a soil which is appropriate to them, and as waters flow from mountains to the ocean.

3. A holy life, also, when it is once fully and permanently established, is *as natural to those who are holy*, as a sinful life is to those who are sinful. In the *mixed*, or partly sanctified life, which is intermediate between the sinful and the holy, there is a conflict of natures; and we cannot well say, for any length of time, what the true or real nature of the man is. But when a person has obtained inward victory, when selfishness has ceased to exist, and when also he is freed from the lingering and perplexing influences of former evil habits, he is then the subject of a truly natural life. Just the opposite of the unregenerated man, — with a life as true and just as that of the other is untrue and unjust, — he does right, not by an effort which has the appearance, as well as the reality, of going against nature, but because, with his present disposition, he *cannot do otherwise*. He not only loves God, but he does it without reflecting on his love, without any effort, which would imply a conflict with some inward, opposing principle. He does it freely, easily, and perfectly; which would not be the case if he did it with conscious effort, or if his mind were

diverted from the object of his love to reflections on the love itself. Holiness has become a *nature*.

4. It is one of the characteristics of a holy life, when it is not merely incipient but has become a *nature*, that, with the single exception of that, which, in being sin, is the opposite of itself, it easily harmonizes and sympathizes *with what now is*. In other words, while the inward fountain of holy love at the heart is always the same, and always full, the streams which flow from it, repelled by opposition, or attracted by sympathy, take their course variously, in the diversified channels of Providence.

Accordingly, harmonizing with the present objects of his thoughts and affections, the holy man is one in nature, but diversified in manifestation. He "weeps with those who weep, and rejoices with those who rejoice." Under the unerring impulses of the life which is from God, he becomes "all things to all men," but without losing the identity of his character as one united with God, and as being the "temple of the Holy Ghost." Instructed by the teachings of love, which is the best of all teachers, he is a man of smiles or of tears, of action or of rest. He rests when it is the time to rest, because rest in its time is better than toil out of time; but he labors when Providence calls him to labor, and love makes his labor sweet. He has a heart for humanity, and a heart for nature. More than a mere amateur of the outward world, he loves the rocks and the mountains for their own beauty and sublimity, and for the God that dwells in them. His heart warms and melts in the summer sunshine; but the thunder is his also, and the lightning. Nothing is out of place, because place is subordinated to the eternity and ubiquity of the life within. He is a citizen of his country, and serves her well, with-

out losing the evidence of his citizenship in heaven; a subject of the powers that are ordained of God, without ceasing to be the subject of Him who has ordained them. He sings praises with the devoted Christian, and his heart yearns and melts over the impenitent sinner. In his simplicity, he is the companion of children; and in his wisdom, the counsellor of age. He can sit at meat with the "publican and sinner," or receive the hospitality of the unhumbled Pharisee; and, in both cases, he unites the proprieties of love with the faithfulness of duty.

And all this, which seems to imply contradiction, and to require effort, is what it is, in all its ease and all its promptness, because it is not the result of worldly calculation, but the infallible working of a *divine nature.*

5. It is important to understand the view which has now been presented. The want of a full understanding of it has sometimes perplexed those persons who have been led by the Holy Ghost into the higher stages of experience. They doubt their love, because they find it so easy and natural to love. The suggestion arises in their minds, because the perception of their own working is lost in the fact of God's working, that perhaps nothing is done at all. Certain it is that their present state is very different from their former state, when they were but beginners in the religious life.

Formerly, their life was a divided one. The inward struggle was almost incessant. Comparatively speaking, there was no rest, no peace. But *now*, the unity of their affections in God has put an end to all interior trouble, except so far as the soul is tried by temptations originating from without. Formerly, they found the service of God, both in its inward and outward forms, obstructed and hard, requiring the greatest effort. But

now they rejoice in God always, as if they had no other business, and no other desire. Formerly, they could hardly eat, or speak, or move, without great anxiety, in consequence of finding sin intermingled with everything. But *now* they find the grace of God sufficient for the regulation of the appetites and the social principles; and those things which were once occasions of temptation and sorrow, are *now* occasions of gratitude. Formerly, they conformed their actions to God, who was a God afar off;—and this was troublesome, because the agency was in a great degree in themselves. But *now* God, who dwells within, conforms the soul to the action; and thus they are not conscious either of effort or trouble. In a word, "*their yoke is easy, and their burden is light.*"

6. These remarks call to mind something which we have noticed in the writings of Madame Guyon. All nature conveyed to her a lesson of religion;—the woods, the waters, the flowers, every living and moving thing. Hence her beautiful lines to the swallow:—

> "I am fond of the swallow;—I learn from her flight,
> Had I skill to improve it, a lesson of love.
> How seldom on earth do we see her alight!
> She dwells in the skies, she is ever above."

She saw a great deal of God in the birds, and in the sheep, and in the oxen, and in all the various lower animals that live and move around us. And she repeatedly says of herself, that she seemed to be like them;—meaning that there was something, in the operations of her own inward life, which led her to sympathize with them. The explanation of what she says is this:—The life of the lower animals is not a device, a calculation, but a *nature*. They move, as they are moved by

that instinctive power within them, which obviously has its origin in something out of themselves. The life of animals, although it is not elevated to the rank of moral life, is yet a life from God. And it was her clear perception of this, which led her to study their habits, and to sympathize with them so much. She saw in them God's life existing as a nature. The life of God in her own soul, though greatly superior in kind, was like that of animals, in one respect, — it had become a *nature* to her. And it seemed to her to operate much in the same way and with the same certainty that the instincts operate in the lower animals. It was not more natural and easy for the swallow to lift its wing, and to ascend in a clear summer sky, than for her own soul to ascend and unite itself with God.

7. And how wonderful her inward peace was, all know who are acquainted with her history. She gives us expressly to understand that she did not undertake to regulate herself by the common human methods; conscious as she was that God, by a new law of life, had become her inward regulator. And she was thus freed from a thousand anxieties and dangers.

And it is obvious how greatly this state of things must contribute to the true peace and rest of the soul in all cases. Happy, thrice happy, is such a man! His countenance is cheerful, because he has joy in his heart. If he seems to do nothing, it is because God works in him. If his burden is light, it is because God bears it. Satan, envious of their happiness, sometimes says to such, "Ye are deceived. Why do ye not fast, as did John's disciples?" But Jesus replies now, as he replied in former times: — "Can the children of the bridechamber fast, *while the bridegroom is with them?*"

CHAPTER X.

THE SOUL IN UNION WITH GOD HAS REST, BECAUSE IT HAS PASSED FROM THE MEDITATIVE TO THE CONTEMPLATIVE STATE.

The contemplative state naturally preceded by the meditative. — Some account of the meditative state. — This state implies effort, and some degree of pain. — Nature of the contemplative state. — Particulars in which it differs from the meditative state. — In all cases it is natural and easy. — Of the fixedness or permanency of the contemplative state. — The beauty and wonderful effects of this state.

One of the characteristics of a soul which is brought into union with God, is that it is *contemplative*. This is so much the case, that it seems to be proper here to give some explanations of a state which is eminently delightful and profitable; and especially because it is in this state of mind that we find one of the elements and sources of that divine peace which we have been endeavoring to explain.

2. We shall the better understand the contemplative state, if we keep in mind that it is naturally preceded by the *meditative state*. Every religious man knows what it is to direct his thoughts to God; in other words, to meditate upon him and upon those objects which are closely connected with him. In the meditative state, the religious man not only holds God in view by means of the meditative act, namely, by acts of perception and reflection upon the divine character; but he

always does it with more or less of mental effort:—that is to say, by a definite and formal act *of the will*. So that the meditative state, though necessary and important in its place, is in some degree painful. And hence it is, that meditation, in order to render the mental operation more easy and effective, is generally understood to imply and to require a particular time to be set apart, and also a particular place remote from interruption. Meditation, therefore, though very necessary, is not in all respects a natural state; and, consequently, implying as it does a degree of effort and of resistance against other tendencies, does not appear to be entirely consistent with the highest rest and peace of the soul.

3. But it is not so with the contemplative state. Contemplation, in the religious sense of the term, is meditation *perfected*. Considered as a religious state, contemplation, without formally aiming at the discovery of new truths in relation to God, is a calm dwelling upon him in thought, as he is already known to the mind, attended with faith, with such new views also as are naturally and easily presented, and with affectionate exercises of the heart. And, accordingly, it differs from the meditative state in a number of respects; some of which we shall now proceed to mention.

4. Contemplation, like the meditative state, has an object towards which it is especially directed, and that object is *God*. But the remark to be made here is this. While it is like the meditative state in the sameness of its object, it is unlike it in another particular; namely, it is not propelled towards its object, if we may so speak, by a forced effort of the will; but is rather gently and sweetly attracted towards it by the perception of its innate loveliness. The contemplative man, therefore, in consequence of being in perfect union with God,

dwells upon him, in his acts of contemplation, with a sweet quietude or rest of spirit, of which the merely meditative man is, in a greater or less degree, destitute.

5. Another point of difference is this. The meditative man dwells upon God as a God limited or particular; — that is to say, as circumscribed by the limitations of form and locality. The contemplative man, on the contrary, dwells upon him as a God *universal*. But this remark requires some explanation.

The common idea of God not only ascribes to him the attribute of personality, — an attribute which is essential to all correct views of him under all circumstances, — but also assigns to him a form, and places him as having form in some definite and distant locality; — as dwelling, for instance, within the walls of the New Jerusalem, as shut up within golden gates, or as seated on a lofty white throne of celestial beauty. This conception of the Divinity, which appears to be the common one at first, is probably well suited to the earlier stages of religious experience, when the mind is just beginning to recover itself from the weakness and blindness of sin. And we may say, further, there is great truth in it as far as it goes, — but it is not *the whole truth*. It is true, that God occupies place; and that place may be here, or there, or anywhere; but it is equally true, that he is not *limited* to place. It is true that God may assume form; and that, on special occasions and for special reasons, he has assumed it; but it is equally true, that form is not essential to him. So that, when our conception, relieved from the embarrassments of sin, expands, so as to correspond, in some degree, to the magnitude of the object, we find him not under one form only, but under all forms; not in one place merely, but in all places. Everywhere the Divin-

ity which was before veiled by unbelief, emerges into light. But he is still a personal God, though infinite in the varieties of form, infinite in the multiplications of place; though seen and recognized by faith in every tree, and plant, and rock, and flower; in every star, in the wandering moon, in the bright sun, in the floating cloud, in the wide and deep sea, in insects and birds, and the wild beasts of the mountains, in men, in angels, in all things, beings and places. It is God thus revealed in his universality that we call God *universal*, in distinction from God *local*.

6. The meditative man attaches himself to the God *local;* the contemplative man attaches himself to the God *universal*. But to do the first, namely, to seek God in a particular place, to the exclusion of other places, requires effort, and is in some degree painful; because we must seek him "as a God afar off." The latter, namely, to commune with him in all places and in all objects, — supposing ourselves to have arrived at the appropriate state, and the adequate power to be given us, — is natural and easy; because, finding God even without seeking him at all, we contemplate him as a God present. Being in the midst of places and objects, none of which are, or can be, separate from a divine presence, all the soul has to do is to look and love. Calmly and sweetly it casts its eye upon every object which is presented to its notice, and it finds itself dwelling upon God in all.

7. The contemplative state, like that of meditation, is, for the time being, a *fixed* state. That is to say, the mind unites itself firmly and fixedly with its appropriate object for a length of time. In the highest degrees of sanctification, it becomes almost a permanent state. It may be broken temporarily by the pressure

of care and worldly business. But it is the natural tendency of the truly holy mind, when left to itself, to fall into this state. That is to say, in every object the contemplative man, who cannot be truly contemplative without being truly holy, catches a new glimpse of the Divinity; and has no heart to leave it, until the vicissitudes of Providence call him to other objects where he has new revelations of the divine nature, and new exercises and intimacies of love.

8. To him who has this deeper insight and this higher unity, God breathes in the vernal zephyr, and shines brightly in the summer's sun; he sees him moulding and painting the fruits of autumn, and sending the hoar-frosts and piling up the snows of winter; all inanimate nature is full of him. He sees God, also, in what is ordinarily called the work of men's hands. It is God that spreads his pillow;—it is God that builds his house;—it is God that ploughs his fields;—it is God that sells for him and buys for him;—God gives him pain, and sends him joy,—smites him when he is sick, and heals him when he gets well.

And what God does for himself, he does also for others, and for communities. He sees God in all the changes which take place around him. It is God that builds up and puts down,—that makes kings and makes subjects,—that builds up one nation and destroys another,—that binds the chains of the captive and gives liberty to the free,—that makes war and makes peace. All men, and princes, and nations, are in his hands like clay in the hands of the potter. His eternal will, which, in being established on the basis of eternal wisdom and justice, never has changed and never can change, dashes them to pieces, or fashions them to ever-

lasting life. All things are his, *sin only excepted*, and sin *is sin*, because it is not of God.

9. What blessed results would follow, if all men, arrived at the state of holy contemplation, had that faith which deprives God of form, and displaces him from a particular locality, in order that, being without form, he may attach himself to *all forms*, and that, being without place, he may be found present *in all places*. Such a faith, if it would not at once carry us up to the New Jerusalem, would do that which amounts to much the same thing, — it would bring the New Jerusalem down to earth, and would expand its golden walls and gates to the limits of the world and of the universe. "And I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, *coming down from God* out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, *the tabernacle of God is with men*, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away."

CHAPTER XI.

OF THE SPIRIT AND PRACTICAL COURSE OF THE MAN WHO IS AT REST IN GOD.

The man of inward peace is previously the subject of the same inward contest as others. — Some particulars in which he is now at rest. — Effect on his outward appearance. — Such men, more than others, bear the true image of God. — Expansion of their feelings. — Practical remarks.

The religiously quiet man, like other men less advanced in grace, has experienced the sharpness of the inward contest; but God has helped him. Having striven with his corrupt nature, having passed through, as it were, the storms of regeneration, he has at last entered into the haven of inward rest.

Inwardly instructed in the limitations of the human understanding, he rests from reasonings in all cases where reasoning owes homage to faith. God is his reason. Taught by the great Teacher of the soul, that the true end of desires is to be found in the wisdom of the Infinite, he quietly ceases from all those desires which have their origin in a corrupted nature, and finds all his aims and purposes harmonized and fulfilled in the fulfilment of God's purposes. God is his desire. While he condemns sin, he is not impatient with it; but bears with it in the same spirit of calmness that God does; never doubting that, in the great issue of things which is rapidly approaching, the unity and love of God will over-

come the divisions and hatreds of Satan. Devoted to the will of God to the extent of his power, and resting firmly upon the promises in unshaken faith, he is exempt alike from the reproofs of conscience and the agitations of fear.

2. A divine peace, of which God alone could be the author, is written upon his heart, his countenance, his actions, his whole life. The outward man is the calm mirror of the man within. He sees the commotions of the world; he beholds the surges and hears the noise of its contentions; but it does not move him from his position; it does not alter the fixedness of his purpose; it does not disturb the peace of his spirit. His countenance, written over with signatures which have their source in the centre of his spirit, shows neither the scowl of anger, nor the distortions of fear. Not that he is indifferent to the strife; but he believes and knows that the God in whom he trusts has power to control it. He sees the calm beyond.

3. Such men, more than any others, bear the image of God; whose mighty power is established and operates in peace and in silence. A perfect being is, by the very fact of his perfection, unalterably tranquil. Jesus Christ, who was God revealed in humanity, and who, therefore, was the model of the perfect man, was a quiet man; he did not attract the world's notice by his noise. On the contrary, the world, disappointed that he came without observation, was attracted to him, contrary to what is usual with it, by the calm but mighty influence of his purity and gentleness. Meek, quiet, loving, doing what the divine order of things called him to do, he gave no occasion for reconsiderations and repentance, but left the evidence of his divinity in the perfection of everything he said and did. And in all cases will it be found, in

the history of all good men of all ages, that the harmony of thought with truth, of feeling with thought, and of conscience with feeling; in other words, the perfect adjustment of character, will find its result and its testimony in inward and outward peace.

4. Happy, then, is the man, of whom it can be said, in the scriptural sense of the terms, he is *quiet in spirit;* — a state of mind which can exhibit itself in the most trying situations, and with more effect and beauty perhaps than on other occasions. Smite the quietist on one cheek, and he turns the other. Drive him from his home, and the smile of his cheerful heart lights the walls of a cavern or a dungeon. He returns love for hatred, blessing for cursing. When dying by the hand of his enemies, his language is, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

5. "In quietness," says Isaiah, "shall be strength." The quiet man is necessarily victor, — conquering by the force of sentiments which are eternal, and not by the incidents of situation which are perpetually changing. It is not the body which constitutes the man, but the divine principle at the centre. A man is, according to his *faith*. And the man, who treads the dungeon or the scaffold, with the acquiescent belief that it is the allotment of Providence, is no prisoner, because he has all the freedom which he asks, and can lose nothing by the death which he himself cheerfully welcomes. He conquers by that power to suffer which is given him through faith. And the power, which renders him victorious, gives him divine peace and happiness.

6. It remains only to be added, that the man who rests in God, by having the principles of his nature brought into harmony with the divine nature, cannot be restricted by the limitations of name or country; but has

a spirit which belongs to the world. It is true his speculative beliefs may harmonize in certain directions more than in others; but, bearing Christ's image at the centre, he belongs to Christ rather than a party, and all mankind are his brethren. The turbulence of nature has given place to the pacifications of grace, in order that he may extend the right hand of fellowship to those of every name and every clime.

7. In this connection, although it might have been equally appropriate in some other place, we wish to make a remark of some practical importance. It is this. Quietness of spirit, originating in the operations of divine grace, is the sign of truth or rectitude of spirit, and also of a right course of action. And, on the other hand, a spirit disturbed, a spirit in a state of agitation, is the sign of a wrong done, or of a wrong proposed to be done. Accordingly, in any proposed course of action, if it cannot be entered upon with entire quietness of spirit, with a soul so entirely calm, that, in its measure, it may be said to reflect unbrokenly the image of God, then the probability is that the course proposed to be taken is wrong, or, at least, of a doubtful character; and our true and safe course is to delay, until we can obtain further light in regard to it.

This view is founded upon the relation existing between quietness of spirit and faith. And it seems to us to harmonize with the remark of the apostle, that "*whatsoever is not of faith is sin.*" Rom. 14. 23.

WHEN FROM THE HEART ITS ILLS ARE DRIVEN.

When from the heart its ills are driven,
And God, restored, resumes control,
The outward life becomes a heaven,
As bright as that within the soul.

Where once was pride and stern disdain,
And acts expressing fierce desire,
The eye, that closest looks, in vain
Shall seek the trace of nature's fire.

No flame of earth, no passion now,
Has left its scorching mark behind;
But lip, and cheek, and radiant brow,
Reflect the brightness of the mind.

For where should be the signs of sin,
When sin itself has left the breast;
When God alone is Lord within,
And perfect faith gives perfect rest?

CHAPTER XII.

THE SOUL IN PEACE IS THE TRUE KINGDOM OF GOD.

Importance of the subject. — Explanations of the term kingdom. — Its universality. — Applied especially to the human soul. — Three characteristics of the kingdom of God in the soul, namely, it recognizes but one authority; God rules in it and over it; it constantly renders him the highest homage. — When the kingdom of God is set up in the human heart, it is set up everywhere. — Of the connections existing in the material and mental world. — The material and animal creation restored at the same time with man.

In bringing this interesting and important subject to a conclusion, we have only one thing more to add, namely, that the soul in peace is the true kingdom of God. Such it is virtually asserted to be in the Scriptures; and such it is in fact. And, if this be the case, it is important to understand and appreciate an idea, which is interesting in itself, and is susceptible of applications which are not less so.

In saying that the soul is God's kingdom, it should be kept in mind that the term KINGDOM is relative in its meaning. It implies the idea of a governor, as well as of that which is governed. Accordingly, it is not only the place where the king dwells, but the place of the king's authority. It is not only the king's home, which is the original meaning of the term, but the place which the king rules over.

2. In a certain sense God rules everywhere. There

is no place where he does not dwell. Nor is there any place which excludes his authority. He rules in hell as well as in heaven. He rules also over all earthly things; over things material as well as immaterial. He rules over all moral beings. He rules over men.

3. Undoubtedly there is an universal kingdom; — a kingdom including all things. But, ordinarily, when we speak of God's kingdom on earth, we mean his *spiritual* kingdom, — the kingdom of mind, and not of matter; the kingdom of hearts, and not of outward forms and localities. The divine throne, erected everywhere, is especially and emphatically erected in man's spirit. The soul of man, a fit subject for the divine administration, always is, when renovated, and always ought to be, *God's kingdom.* Hence the remarkable expression of the Saviour: "THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU."

4. But in speaking of the human soul as a fit subject for the divine administration, and in saying that it *ought* to be God's kingdom, we imply, that, under certain circumstances, by doing or being what it ought not to do or ought not to be, it is not God's kingdom. And thus we come to our proposition. It is the soul IN PEACE, (that peace which the Saviour speaks of when he says, "Peace I leave with you, *my* peace I give unto you,") the soul *in peace*, and not under any other circumstances, which constitutes, in the truest and highest sense, the *kingdom of God.* "For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, In returning and rest shall ye be saved. In quietness and confidence, [that is to say, in the *quietness and peace of faith,*] shall be your strength." Isa. 30: 15.

5. A soul in peace is the true kingdom of God, among other things, because *it recognizes but one authority.* Its eye is "single;" looking in one direction, and having knowledge of but one master. It feels the deep import

of the Saviour's words, "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." And while it recognizes but one authority, in distinction from a two-fold or divided authority over it, it cheerfully submits to that authority and harmonizes with it. It thinks what God thinks, desires what God desires, wills what God wills.

On the other hand, a soul not at peace is one which is rebellious against its rightful master, or which wickedly proposes to serve two rival masters at the same time.

6. Again, a soul in peace is the kingdom of God, because *God rules in it and over it.* It is true, his government is sustained, not so much by positive and outward enactments, as by the perfect adjustment of affectional and moral relations. But still it is a true government, although carried on less by force than by the truth mutually communicated and received, and by love harmonizing with love. In the truly peaceful soul, the life of God, including that which is perceptive as well as that which is affectional, seems to be reflected in the life of the creature. God is not more a living speaker to the soul than the soul, in a state of peace, is a living auditor. Moment by moment he communicates his will inwardly by a spiritual operation; and the intimations of his will are obeyed, by the soul which receives them, in the very moment of their communication. And this divine obedience is the obedience of harmony rather than of compulsion; the obedience of a subordinate nature yielding to and mingling with a higher and originative nature, through the influence of that beautiful attraction which always exists between kindred natures; but it is still that true and perfect obedience which God approves.

7. In the third place, the soul in the state of true peace or rest, is the kingdom of God, because it con-

stantly renders him the highest homage. And it does so, because its state of peace or rest is the result, and may be said to be the completion, of every other state. It is not necessary for a soul, in such a state, to make costly sacrifices, to go to distant places, or to bow in temples, as if the true homage of the heart could be rendered only or chiefly by outward acts. Wherever it is, provided it is where God in his providence requires it to be, it is itself the highest worship and homage of God. The Infinite Mind delights in it, as a soul continually offering to himself the highest reverence and praise. The state of holy peace is more than that of penitence, because, although penitence implies a sorrow for sin, it does not necessarily imply a conquest over sin. It is more than good desire, because such desires are not acceptable in the sight of God without faith attending them. It is more than faith, because it is the end, of which faith is the means or instrument. It is more than gratitude, because it includes gratitude, as a whole includes a part. It is the result, the expression, the completion of the whole. It is man, harmonizing with God. It is God, dwelling and living in man.

He, therefore, who is in true peace of spirit, is a continual worshipper. He is himself his temple, and his heart is his altar. The fire is always burning; the incense always ascends.

8. It remains to be added, that God, in being restored to the human soul and made at peace with it, not only sets up his kingdom in man, but in other things with which man is essentially connected. When the kingdom of God is restored in the human heart, it is restored everywhere. It should not be forgotten, that the world, in all its varieties, is but one system; a connection obviously running through all its parts; each part being

sustained by and harmonizing with the others. The mineral kingdom has a definite relation to the vegetable; the vegetable to the animal; the animal to the sentient; and the sentient to the moral. They expand and develop themselves in progression, and with an infinity of ties and relations. They are parts of one great and harmonious system of arrangements, conceived by one perfect wisdom, and sustained by one perfect love. The completion of all is in man. He stands at the head, and if all are made for man, it is equally true that man is made for all.

Time and God's grace will make this great truth better understood than it is at present. There is no isolation in the universe, except what is made by sin. There is a true and noble sense in which Adam and all created things around him were one. There is a sense in which Adam and all his posterity were one. There is a sense in which Christ, the second Adam, and all his redeemed children are one.

9. When man fell, nature fell. The flowers wept, and bowed their heads in sorrow. The beasts and the birds, that once loved him, now fled away from him. And the reverse will be true when man returns again. All nature, sympathizing with the restoration of its head, will wipe away its tears and put on its smiles, whenever man arises from the dust. Life will return, and beauty will return with life. The cessation of mental death will be crowned with the return of physical health and strength, which will be experienced in outward nature as well as in man's person. The curse of "thorns and thistles" will be revoked, because man, on whose account it was inflicted, will be restored to favor. "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree. The trees shall

clap their hands; and the hills and the mountains shall break forth into singing."*

Fear, also, shall be taken away from the beasts of the field. The bond of union, beginning with man in his restoration to God, will extend everywhere. The infusion of love flowing from God to man will be felt in every part of creation. The birds will sing with a happier note. "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion, and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them."†

"See truth, love, and mercy in triumph descending,
And nature all glowing in Eden's first bloom;
On the cold cheek of death smiles and roses are blending,
And beauty immortal awakes from the tomb."

* Isa. 55: 12, 13 † Isa 11: 6.